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ABSTRACT

This teacher's guide is intended to be used as a companion to the student guides covering the first 20 programs in the film series, Footsteps, which focuses on some of the major problems and concerns faced by all prospective parents and parents of young children. The complete curriculum material from the student manual is reproduced in reduced format, and accompanied by a brief introduction to the theme, including suggestions for possible introductory activities; guidelines for the teacher to implement the student guide, additional relevant information, and ideas for teaching the materials; and a bibliography for further reading. While it is possible to implement the written materials as a complete curriculum, it is preferable to use the student guides and film programs together so that the written materials are able to build on the ideas presented in the program and expand on and reinforce them. (JEG)

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footsteps

TEACHER MANUAL
Part I

(A Guide to accompany the Curriculum for Programs 1–20)

Developed by a consortium of

Applied Management Sciences, Inc.
Silver Spring, Maryland

Educational Film Center
Springfield, Virginia

Institute for Child Study
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland

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TO THE TEACHER

The **footsteps** curriculum materials focus on some of the major problems and concerns faced by all prospective parents and parents of young children. This is Part I of the Teacher Guide, and covers the first 20 programs in the film series. Part II is for programs 21-30. Both volumes are identical in format and are intended to be used as companion materials with the Student Guides.

STUDENT GUIDES

The 30 Student Guides are designed around a magazine format to allow maximum flexibility to the different groups that will be using the materials. Each Guide has seven sections:

- FROM THE EDITORS presents an overview of the theme and contents of the Guide.
- THE BIG IDEAS summarizes the major learnings of the theme.
- The FEATURE ARTICLES contain the major content, including practical suggestions for parents and future parents. These articles are in a variety of formats — ranging from standard articles to letters to a mock trial — and incorporate a variety of approaches to learning.
- The FILM REVIEW SECTION includes a synopsis of the film program and a related discussion question.
- The ACTIVITY PAGES offer three activities, aimed at both individual and group participation, that help the student apply the learnings presented in the articles.
- GRAB BAG provides a selection of field activities, discussion questions, and research topics designed to reinforce the ideas presented in the articles and to meet the needs of a wide variety of classroom groups.
- BOOK BROWSING is a bibliography for further reading on the program's theme.

TEACHER GUIDE

The Teacher Guide incorporates the complete student curriculum materials in reduced form. In addition, the following additional material appears with each theme:

- TO BEGIN. . . , a brief introduction to the theme, including suggestions for possible introductory activities.
- Guidelines for the teacher to implement the Student Guide, additional relevant information, and ideas for teaching the materials. This information appears in brackets which pinpoint for the teacher an appropriate point in the Student Guide where this material could be introduced.
- BOOK BROWSING, a bibliography for further reading.

Utilization of the Materials

In teaching the **footsteps** curriculum, several approaches may be followed.

1. *All 30 Guides may be used with students as a complete course of study on parenting.* Interrelationships between the themes are noted within this Guide.

2. *Selecting Student Guides may be used as a unit of focus.* For instance, you may wish to teach themes relevant to the needs of infants and concentrate on themes such as "The Need for Early Stimulation: A Sense of the World" and "Attachment and Independence: You Can't Have One Without the Other." The curriculum units can be divided to fit specific classroom needs or constraints posed by the school calendar. Each curriculum guide is able to stand on its own. When taught in conjunction with the other themes, the learnings are reinforced.
3. *The Student Guides may be utilized with or without the accompanying television programs.* While it is, of course, preferable to use both the film program and the Student Guide together, it is possible to implement the written materials as a curriculum on its own. When used together, the written materials are able to build on the ideas presented in the program and expand on and reinforce them. If it is not possible to include the video portion, though, teachers can use the written materials on their own. Therefore, the video programs and the accompanying nonbroadcast curriculum can be viewed as both complimentary to each other but capable of standing on their own.

   When using the curriculum in conjunction with the films, we believe that students will benefit most from the TV programs when they have read the feature articles beforehand. Other than that, we recommend that you pick and choose the activities that are best suited to your class.

In teaching the curriculum, you may find it desirable to maintain a classroom library in the **footsteps** series. One source for obtaining information which is either free or at a reduced rate is through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

We hope that these curriculum materials will provide a framework that you can rely on, but one that will also spark you own creativity.

CREDITS

Curriculum Development

PRIMARY AUTHORS:	Sharon Barry, Ed.M. Laura Colker, M.A. Laura Dittmann, Ph.D. Robert Huebner, Ph.D. Joanna Phinney, Ed.M.
CONTRIBUTING AUTHOR:	Suzanne Thouvenelle

Content Development

DIRECTORS:	Laura Colker, M.A. Charles Flatter, Ed.D.
TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS:	Laura Dittmann, Ph.D. Robert Huebner, Ph.D. John Kurtz, Ph.D. Bonnie Tyler, Ph.D. Martin Bloom, M.A.
DESIGN AND ILLUSTRATION:	Sheila Humphreys

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footsteps

TEACHER MANUAL

9

IDENTITY:

THE "I'S" HAVE IT

Queen for a Day

TO BEGIN...

When most people hear the question "Who am I?" they honestly don't know. They may think of their name or their job or the place where they live. They forget about the inner person that has been shaped over the years through other people's reactions to them.

They forget, too, that the search for "Who am I?" began in childhood. In the first years of life, children start working on their identity by discovering that their bodies are physically separate from the rest of the world and by starting to become independent.

You could begin this unit with a discussion of what "Who am I?" means to students. Help them see how the foundation for our latter search for identity is laid in early childhood.

FROM THE EDITORS

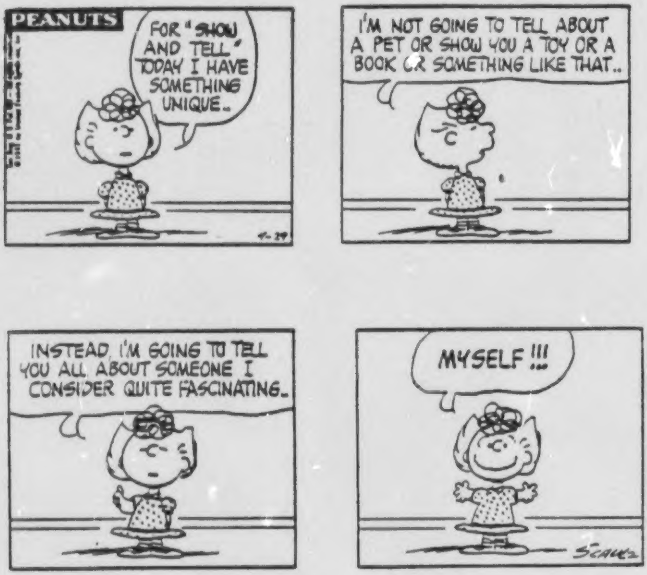
Who am I? This is one of the big questions facing each of us, and we each have to find our own answer.

Many people associate the search for identity with adolescence, mid-life, or other turning points in life. Actually, though, this process begins at birth. It is as babies and young children that we first start to grope for "me."

In this booklet you will learn how young children go about defining themselves, and how this effort can affect their relationships with other family members. You will find out that parents can ease this process, and help children paint a picture of themselves that is clear and strong.

THE BIG IDEAS

- Every person has the need to feel special and unique.
- Children's search for identity expresses itself in many different ways and sometimes brings them into conflict with other family members.
- When parents realize that many of children's behaviors are efforts to establish identity, they are more likely to help their children grow and develop.


PEANUTS
FOR "SHOW AND TELL" TODAY I HAVE SOMETHING UNIQUE..
4-29
I'M NOT GOING TO TELL ABOUT A PET OR SHOW YOU A TOY OR A BOOK OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT..
INSTEAD, I'M GOING TO TELL YOU ALL ABOUT SOMEONE I CONSIDER QUITE FASCINATING..
MYSELF !!!
SCHULZ

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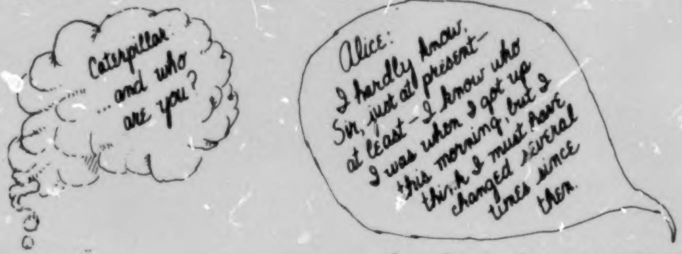
THE SOURCE OF SELF


Caterpillar: ...and who are you?
Alice: I hardly know, Sir, just at present—at least—I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have changed several times since then.

Lewis Carroll — Alice in Wonderland

We all want to be special.

We all need to feel that we have our own important place in the world. Most of all, we need to be noticed and respected by other people. Only in this way can we become secure and independent adults. Only if we know who we are can we build healthy relationships with others.

This sense of oneself as a separate and unique person is called **IDENTITY**. We are not born with a sense of identity. Nor is identity suddenly acquired when we reach a certain age:

Identity is the result of a long process that begins at birth and continues throughout life.

Newborn babies don't know that they are persons. In fact, to young babies, the world is all one thing. They don't know that their fingers belong to them and their mothers' fingers belong to someone else. They see their feet as strange objects that sometimes come into view. They can't tell the difference between touching these feet and touching their teddy bear's paws.

Gradually, however, by touching, tasting, watching, and listening, babies learn where their bodies end and the rest of the world begins. They learn that they have the power to make their feet appear and disappear. They learn that when they bite their feet it hurts, but when they bite their teddy bear's paws it doesn't. They discover that they are separate from the people around them.

They discover "me."

When they learn to talk, children acquire another tool for building a picture of themselves. Learning their own names gives children a symbol for thinking of themselves as separate and unique. Knowing words like "big" and "good" adds to their self-awareness. Hearing words like "little" and "bad" also teaches them awareness — but of another kind.

And, as children grow and start to move around, they express this growing sense of "me" in behaviors that all parents will recognize.

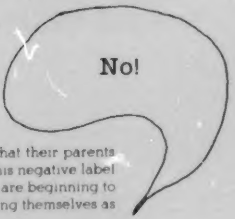
Have students share their own experiences with children acting in these ways. How many of these behaviors did they see in the film *Queen for a Day?*

Testing 1, 2, 3 . . .

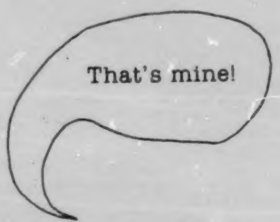
Me do it!

Toddlers like to do things for themselves. They are working toward self reliance — or **Autonomy**. They want to push their strollers rather than ride in them. They want to put on clothes without help. In fact, at times toddlers absolutely insist on their independence.

Toddlers are still in the first stages of autonomy, though. One minute they refuse help. The next minute they want to be cuddled.



Because 2-year-old children often seem to do the opposite of what their parents suggest, this period is sometimes called "The Terrible Two's." This negative label clouds the fact that a very positive step is taking place. Toddlers are beginning to assert themselves as individuals. **Defiance** is one way of declaring themselves as separate persons with minds of their own.



For 2- and 3-year-olds in our culture, being separate means the right to **Ownership**. Their refusal to share toys is not a sign that they will always be selfish. Rather, it shows that they are learning what belongs to them and what does not. After children feel sure that certain things are "mine," they can more easily let go of them and share them with other people.

To fully share, a person must FIRST fully possess. None of us can share what we don't have. And the little child needs time to get the feel of ownership thoroughly worked into his experience before he can let go. . . Allowing a child to possess fully for four or five years and then to share on his own terms says, "I respect your independence and your right to decide for yourself what you will share and with whom. I will work with your need for autonomy." With this fundamental respect, children are likely to be more than generous in the long run.
— Dorothy Corkville Briggs in *Your Child's Self-Esteem.*

Look at me!

Whether they have learned how to do a somersault or build a tower of blocks, young children want **Recognition**. They need to prove to people who are important to them that they can make things happen. By bragging about their accomplishments, children are simply asking for someone to affirm their power.

And their competence. See the unit on this subject.

Guess who I am!

As young children pretend to be someone, they wholeheartedly enter into the feelings and actions of that role. **Role-Playing** teaches them what it's like to be a mommy or a daddy, a doctor or a nurse, a dancer or a pilot. Acting out these parts helps children begin to see what they can become.

This is the time when children also start to become aware of racial and sexual differences.

See the unit on *"Play and Fantasy."*

Me first!

All children want the exclusive attention and approval of their parents. The competition of brothers and sisters for their parents' attention sometimes results in conflicts. Tensions develop between parents and children, too, for all members of the family are working on identity. Just as children learning to walk bump into walls and tables, so children learning who they are bump into other people.

This competition between brothers and sisters is called SIBLING RIVALRY. Have students talk about some of the reasons why siblings "bump" into each other.

Many of these conflicts are an inevitable part of growing up. They help children learn that other people also have needs and may think differently from them. Through these collisions, children can learn to give and take.

Sometimes, though, family tensions are a clue to parents that children need more help in finding their place in the world. When this happens, there are some very specific things parents can do to help children find "me."

ERIK ERIKSON AND THE STAGES OF IDENTITY

Many of the ideas presented in these articles are based on the work of **Erik Erikson**. A European-born psychologist who now lives in the United States, Erikson has studied the process of growing up in many different cultures.

Erikson believes that we all pass through eight stages in our lifelong search for identity. What happens in the earlier stages, says Erikson, determines how successful we are in the later stages. Three of these stages occur during the first five years of life, when the strongest influence on children's identity comes from parents. Their responses determine which of the following qualities children develop:

The other five stages are:

- Industry vs. Inferiority
- Identity vs. Role Confusion
- Intimacy vs. Isolation
- Generativity vs. Stagnation
- Ego Integrity vs. Despair

See Erikson's *Childhood and Society* for a description of all eight stages.

Trust or Mistrust:

In the first stage, babies learn to either trust or mistrust other people. The amount of attention and support parents give children determines whether they become eager or afraid to explore the world.

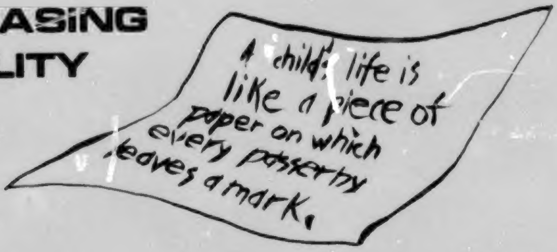
Initiative or Guilt:

When children have learned that they are masters of their own bodies, they start to experiment with new ways of doing things. If parents encourage these efforts, children develop **Initiative** — the desire to keep trying new things. But if parents ridicule their children's efforts, children feel guilty and stop trying.

Autonomy or Doubt:

As children start doing things for themselves, they develop either confidence or doubt in their ability to take care of themselves. Parents who are patient about children's need to be independent help them feel a sense of control over themselves. Parents who don't give children the freedom to do things on their own, or who refuse help when children need it, make them doubt their abilities.

INCREASING VISIBILITY



A child's life is like a piece of paper on which every passerby leaves a mark.

— *Ancient Chinese Proverb*

Children's images of themselves are formed largely through other people:

As parents and other grown-ups respond to them, children learn many important things about themselves.

They learn their names, their sex, and their ethnic group. They discover their strengths and weaknesses. They learn what they look like, what belongs to them, and what does not belong to them.

Children act. Parents react. This is how self-awareness develops. The actions and responses of parents help give a shape to the image the child is forming of "me." They are like mirrors in which the child's image is reflected.

The reflections that parents give their children also teach children many other things about themselves. See the units on *Competence* and *Loving Your Children.*

To make sure that this image is clear and strong, parents can:

SHOW CHILDREN HOW THEY ARE SPECIAL.

Whether they are answering toddlers' endless questions or changing babies' endless diapers, parents can help children become more aware and proud of themselves. They can provide children with basic information about their bodies:

You have pretty black curly hair.

They can help children understand their feelings:

You feel sad when your sister goes to school, don't you?

They can point out children's special skills and accomplishments:

You put that puzzle together much faster today than yesterday.

Everyday reflections such as these support children in their journey toward self-discovery. Special activities such as those on the next page can give further clarity to the child's self-image.

Be sure students understand that this means not just praising children (as in "Good girl" or "Isn't that pretty!") but giving them information about themselves.

PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO DO THINGS THEMSELVES

Identity grows when parents give children a part to play in everyday situations. For example, by letting children do things for themselves, parents support children in their struggle to be independent. By giving children simple but useful tasks to do around the house, parents show children that they have something to contribute to the family.

Parents can also find ways to set up their homes so that children can do more things for themselves. For instance, they can put some clothes hooks at a lower level, or provide step-stools for reaching drawers and sinks. Such activities help children feel that they have a secure place in the family.

Letting children do things for themselves also contributes to many other areas of growth. See, for example, the unit on *The Need for Early Stimulation, Competence,* and *Discipline.*

TRY TO EXPERIENCE THE WORLD AS CHILDREN DO.

It can be difficult for a parent to respond with enthusiasm to a child's repeated cries of "Look at me! Look at me!" Or to react with patience to a child's stubborn "NO!" Or to be understanding when two brothers are quarreling.

Parents can deal with such situations more effectively, though, if they try to look at them from the child's point of view. By looking for the source of behaviors and conflicts, parents will often find that children are just trying to develop and assert their identity. Conflicts sometimes result when children feel that their identity is not being recognized. Understanding these feelings often helps parents find ways to strengthen their children's identity and — at the same time — lessen family tensions.

See the unit on *Listening to Children,* which deals with observing children's behavior and listening beyond their words to find their real needs and concerns.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON IDENTITY

To form a strong and healthy sense of self, children need to have pride in themselves and an awareness of their place in the world. Here are some activities that can help them develop a clear image of . . .

. . . My Body

Introduce babies to themselves in a mirror.

Ask: "Who's that? Why, that's Tracy O'Rourke! Hi, Tracy!"

As children get older, have them watch themselves as they put their hands on their heads, touch their noses and elbows, and count the parts of their bodies. Have them stand next to their brothers, sisters and friends to see how they are the same and how they are different.

. . . My Life

Start an Identity Book for Children.

In a large scrapbook, paste pictures, cards, and other mementos of important times in children's lives.

As they get older, children can collect their own treasures. They can even dictate comments for you to write in, and add their own illustrations.

. . . My Roots

Help Children Make a Picture Map of Their Neighborhood.

First take a walk to find the important places they'll want on their map: a park, school, grocery story, friend's house, etc.

Then, with a large piece of paper and some crayons, help children mark out where these things are. Start with their own house and street, and gradually add other streets and places. Label everything.

. . . My Future

Encourage Pretending.

As children play, they start to think about what they might become. Save old clothes and materials for them to use.

For example, some old clothes, empty cans, boxes, and jars help children pretend they are grocery shopping. Buttons, spools, and an old mirror glued to a piece of cardboard make an instrument panel for an airplane or car.

Help Children Make a Self-Portrait.

Have children lie down on a large piece of wrapping paper or several paper bags slit open and taped together. Trace the outline of their bodies.

Have children fill in this outline with their features: hair, eyes, nose, mouth, nails, etc. They can either draw in clothes or tape some old clothes to the picture.

Hang up their completed self-portrait where everyone can admire it.

Make a Time Line to Help Children Recall Past Events in Their Lives.

String a piece of clothesline along a wall where children can reach it.

Give children clothespins to hang up pictures, cards, clothing, and other souvenirs of important events: the day they were born or the day they learned to ride a bike, for example. Put the events in the order that they happened.

Make a Family Tree.

Use old photographs and a large piece of paper. Make the children the focus of the tree.

Talk about how they are related to other people on the tree, and point out how they are similar to and different from their relatives: "You have red hair like Aunt Sarah." "You're the only person in our family with blue eyes."

Take Children to See What Other People Do and Provide Them With Books That Show People Doing Lots of Different Things.

If you're afraid that children will see poor examples that will limit their choices or expectations, make a special effort to show them what other people of their sex or race have done.

Characters:

Jeannie Sandburg — *a young mother*
Amos Sandburg — *a young father*
Allison Sandburg — *5-year-old daughter of Jeannie and Amos*
Christopher Sandburg — *Allison's 2½-year-old brother*
Mr. Cutter — *Amos' boss*
Babysitter
Christopher's teacher
Allison's teacher
Jeannie's mother

Documentary:

Three mothers discuss special situations that affect identity, including:

- being the first-born child
- being the youngest child

Have students discuss what effect birth order had on the identity needs of the children in the documentary.

FILM REVIEW SECTION

Queen for a Day

Jeannie and Amos Sandburg notice that something seems to be "the matter" with Allison.

As the day begins, Allison is upset because Christopher, her little brother, has scribbled in one of her books. She protests about wearing pants to school like Chris. When told to wear anything she wants, she puts on a fancy party dress. When Christopher is dropped off at his school, Allison is disappointed because his teacher pays more attention to him than to her. Back in the car, she tries to get her parents' attention but is unsuccessful. Finally, when she is not chosen "Queen" at school as she expected, Allison develops a stomach ache and has to be taken home.

Jeannie is covering a news story when Allison becomes sick, so Amos has to pick Allison up. Amos, too, is very busy, and he and Jeannie argue on the phone. That night they realize that they had both felt frustrated and guilty about juggling family and work responsibilities. They also see that Allison has been feeling "invisible." She needs help in feeling special.

WHAT CAN JEANNIE AND AMOS DO TO HELP ALLISON FEEL MORE "VISIBLE?"

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

What was "the matter" with Allison?

- What things upset her? Why?
- How do students think she felt all day?
- How did she try to let people know what was bothering her?
- Was she being supersensitive and too demanding of her parents' attention? Or was she just acting like other 5-year-old children?

Comments: Allison felt that she was being ignored all day. Some of the things that happened to threaten her sense of identity were:

- Christopher's drawing on her book
- being asked to dress like her brother
- not being allowed to wear the dress she chose for school
- being ignored by her parents in the car
- feeling rejected by Christopher's teacher
- not being chosen Queen.

By the end of the day Allison felt invisible.

How did Allison get lost in the shuffle?

- Didn't her parents care about her? Were they bad parents?
- How did Jeannie and Amos respond to Allison's behavior?
- Why weren't these responses effective?
- What else could they have done in each case?
- If they give Allison more attention, will they spoil her?
- Were Amos and Jeannie still working on their own identities? How did this affect their relationship with each other and with their children?
- Was Jeannie trying to do too many things at once? Should she quit her job?
- What about Amos? Was he willing to do his share?

Comments: The Sandburgs are caring, conscientious parents. Because they were not aware of Allison's need to be recognized, however, they did not respond to her in ways that met this need. Instead:

- When Christopher wrote on Allison's book, Jeannie simply promised it wouldn't happen again.
- They didn't recognize Allison's need to talk about her own day in the car.
- They didn't see that she wanted to make up her own mind about what to wear.

Even though Amos and Jeannie work, they could have satisfied Allison's needs through a few minutes attention as they went along. Parents who don't work are just as apt to make the same mistake as Jeannie and Amos.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
PRESCRIPTIONS FOR IDENTITY

You are a children's doctor in a small town. Parents often consult you when they are concerned about their children's behavior. The four situations below are typical of the kinds of questions parents ask you.

How would you advise parents in each case?

I just don't know what to do with my 2-year-old daughter Amy! She's usually a very good child, but lately she's developed a terrible habit. Whether I tell her to pick up her toys, or to come in and eat, the answer is always "NO!" I've scolded her over and over for being fresh, but it hasn't seemed to help.

What in the world is the matter with her? And what can I do to stop those "no's"?

Amy's parents should recognize, first of all, that Amy is working on independence. Her "no's" may be distressing, but they are her best efforts to establish identity.

One way to lessen Amy's "no's" is to avoid giving her direct orders or asking questions that require a "yes" or "no" answer. Instead, her parents can offer choices or make suggestions whenever possible.

We try to teach our children to be kind and considerate. We tell them what's right and wrong, and try to set a good example. In spite of this, our 3-year-old son Tom has been acting very selfishly. He doesn't like to share his toys with anyone. We have to make him do this. Just the other day, when his baby sister started to play with one of his trucks, he got furious.

We're really upset. What have we done wrong?

Probably nothing. Before Tom can share very well, he needs a strong sense of ownership.

When I come home from work at night, you'd think my kids hadn't seen me for a year. Every night it's the same thing: "Daddy, look what I made today." "Daddy, guess what I'm going to do tomorrow." "Daddy, watch this." "Daddy . . . Daddy . . ."

Why do my kids need so much attention? Will I spoil them if I keep giving in to them?

The most awful thing has happened! Our 5-year-old son Jerry loves to dress up and pretend to be different people — the postman, a fireman, a potato farmer, a storekeeper, and things like that. Usually my husband and I encourage this. Last week, though, I found him playing with his sister's dolls and pretending he was a "mommy."

I'm just sure he's going to grow up to be a sissy. What should I do?

When they are very young, children try on a whole range of roles. Parents need not be concerned if playing with dolls is one of their son's many other activities. Some people even believe that such play will help a boy become a better father one day.

activity #2
GRAVE EXPECTATIONS

Many things make up our total picture of ourselves. Part of our identity, for example, is how we feel about our sex, race, and position in the family. Sometimes people outside the family make unfair or unkind judgments of children based on these factors. Part of a parent's job is to help children cope with these influences on their identity.

How would you deal with each of the following situations in ways that helped strengthen your children's identity?

You have a 5-year-old daughter who loves to run and jump and play games. One afternoon she comes into the house looking very sad. When you ask her what's wrong, she says: "I wanted to play ball with Jimmy and his friends, but they said I can't play because I'm a girl and girls don't know how to play ball."

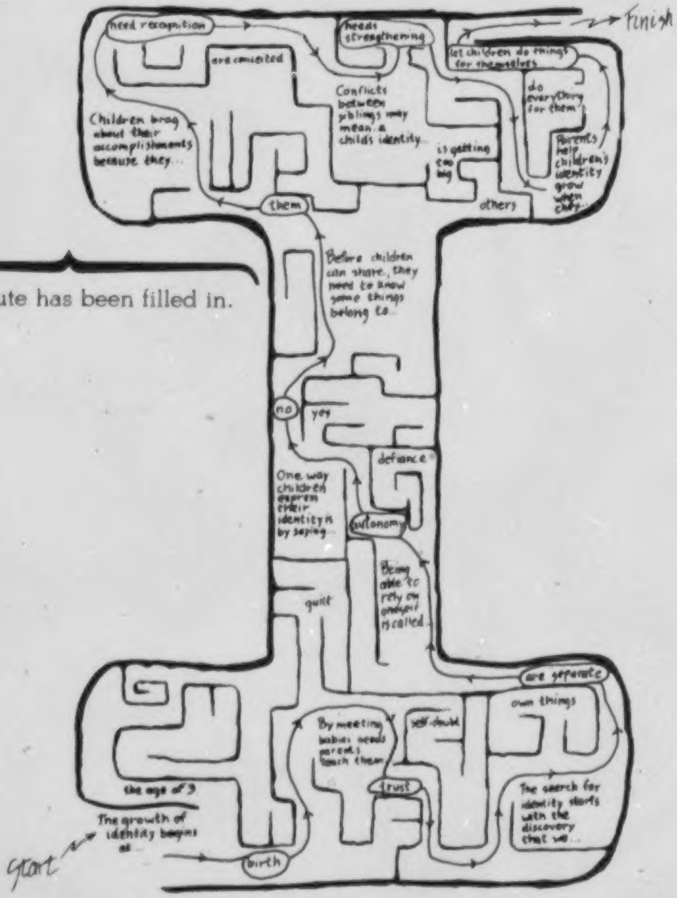
You are a black parent grocery shopping with your two young children. As you round the corner from baked goods to fruits and vegetables, you pass a white parent with his young son. The little boy asks his father in a very loud voice: "Daddy, why do those people have such funny hair?"

Your 4-year-old son comes home from nursery school in a grumpy mood. He is particularly irritable with his older sister. You sit down and talk to him. You find out that he is upset by what his teacher said that day when he was practicing writing: "Come on, Jason. I bet you can do better than that. When your sister was your age, she could write both her first and last names without making a mistake."

You might get students to share their own experiences at being the oldest or youngest or in-between child. Were they ever compared with other children in the family? Did they feel they were treated differently from their brothers or sisters because of their position in the family?

activity #3
IDENTITY MAZE

Find your way to identity by circling the correct answers to the questions in the following maze.


Finish
need recognition
are conceited
needs strengthening
let children do things for themselves
Children brag about their accomplishments because they...
Conflicts between siblings may mean a childs identity...
do everything for them
is getting too big
Parents help children's identity grow when they...
them
others
Before children can share, they need to know some things belong to...
no
yes
defiance
One way children express their identity is by saying...
autonomy
Being able to rely on oneself is called...
guilt
are separate
own things
By meeting babies needs parents teach them
self-doubt
trust
the age of 3
The growth of identity begins at...
The search for identity starts with the discovery that we...
birth
Start

The route has been filled in.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Watch how children express their growing self awareness. Observe a group of young children playing in a day care center, nursery school, Head Start center, or your home or neighborhood. Watch the children for at least 30 minutes and keep a record of:

    what the children say and do to assert their identity
    whether these words and actions cause conflicts with other children
    how the adults in the room or area help build (or put down) the children's identity
    how things in the room or area support (or fail to support) the children's identity.

2. a) Conduct a survey of books for preschool children. Look for ways in which they tell children about one of these aspects of their identity:

        what it means to be a boy or a girl
        what it means to be a member of a particular racial or ethnic group
        what it means to live in a certain geographic area
        what it means to have parents with certain occupations

    How do you think these messages affect the identity of children who are members of these groups? Children who are members of other groups? What can parents do about messages they don't agree with?

    or

    b) Conduct a similar survey of television programs. Include all the various types of programs that children watch: children's programs, prime time programs, cartoons, and commercials.

See the unit on *Children and TV*.

3. Try out one of the activities on page 7 with a young child. Report to the class on how it went and what you think the child learned.

4. a) Write a poem or essay on "What It's Like To Be Me."

    or

    b) Make a collage entitled "Me." Include pictures and drawings that portray things about you: things you like to do, things you own, places you've been, people you know, etc.

to discuss

1. The early childhood years have been called "the first adolescence," because this is when children first find themselves. The teenage years are a time when the struggle for identity is renewed. Children who get off to a good start establishing their identity in early childhood have an easier time in adolescence:

    Do you agree with this?
    Can you see how your own efforts to be independent now might be related to things that happened in your childhood?

GRAB BAG

2. Try to remember how it felt to be a young child:

   Can you recall any situations when you felt that you were not being recognized?
   How did you react?

3. How does it affect a child's identity to be in the minority:

   Do parents of minority children have to make a special effort to help them build healthy identities?
   What are some of the things these parents can do?

In *Black Child Care,* James P. Comer and Alvin F. Poussaint say: *As the child grows older, learning black history and experiencing black culture can add to his pride and broaden his sense of identity. Helping a child learn strategies to deal with racism and the negative feelings about being black that racism incurs is very helpful. But nothing can substitute for the love, care and training that the child needs from birth onward. . . A positive black identity (secondary identity) must be built on an inner core of pride and positive feelings (primary identity) or it may fade away under the harsh light of life's realities.* This is true for children of all racial and cultural groups.

4. Do you agree or disagree that:

   Children who are encouraged to express their identity won't be able to get along with other people because they will be concerned only with themselves.

Contrary to what some people might expect, the stronger children's identities become, the more secure they will feel, and the easier it will be for them to get along with other people.

to research

1. Erik Erikson's stages of identity in young children:

   What happens in each of Erikson's stages?
   What should parents do to ensure optimal growth at each stage?

2. Margaret Mead's studies of sex roles in other cultures:

   How do children learn what it means to be a boy or a girl?
   Are sex roles inborn or determined by the culture?

   (See *Sex and Temperament* and *Coming of Age in Samoa* by this well-known anthropologist.)

In her studies, Margaret Mead came across a variety of sex roles very different from our own. Among the Arapesh, for example, both men and women are trained to be cooperative and unaggressive, while the Mundugumor teach both sexes to be ruthless and aggressive. In a third tribe, the Tchambuh, women play the dominant role. On the basis of these studies, Dr. Mead had concluded that the differences between the sexes are largely socially conditioned.

3. The effect that the position of a child in the family has on identity:

   How does it affect children's sense of identity to be first-born? Second-born? Last born?
   Do parents expect different things of a second or third child than they do of their first?

4. How we continue to reevaluate and build our identity throughout adulthood. (See Erik Erikson, and also *Passages* by Gail Sheehy.)

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . the growth of identity

Childhood and Society. Erik H. Erikson. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1963. (paperback)

The Magic Years. Selma H. Fraiberg. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959. (paperback)

Toddlers and Parents. T. Berry Brazelton, M.D., New York: Dell, 1974. (paperback)

Your Child's Self-Esteem. Dorothy Corkille Briggs. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1970. (paperback)

Also: *From Infant to Individual.* Louise J. Kaplan. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978.

. . . some special situations that affect identity

Black Child Care. James P. Comer and Alvin F. Poussaint. New York: Pocket Books, 1975. (paperback)

Coming of Age in Samoa. Margaret Mead. New York: William Morrow & Company, 1961. (paperback)

Passages. Gail Sheehy. New York: Bantam Books, 1974. (paperback)

Sex and Temperament. Margaret Mead. New York: William Morrow & Company, 1963.

. . . what happens when a child's identity is not recognized

Dibs In Search of Self. Virginia M. Axline. New York: Ballantine Books, 1964. (paperback)

Sybil. Flora Schreiber. New York: Warner Books, 1974.: (paperback)

CHILDREN'S INDIVIDUALITY: A FACT TO CELEBRATE

No Comparison

TO BEGIN...

In many ways all people are the same. We are all alike in our basic make-up, needs and desires. These similarities enable us to understand and get along with one another.

Yet at the same time, we are all different. In the particular way we are put together, our interests, and our strengths and weaknesses, each of us is an "original." These differences make life rich and exciting.

You might start off this unit by having students talk about the ways we are all alike, the ways we are different, and how these differences benefit society.

FROM THE EDITORS

Human differences are a fact of life. They are not only natural, but desirable. Society needs a range of talents and personalities to function well. Young children — and even newborn babies — are individuals, too. In this booklet, you will learn about some of the ways in which children differ. You will also learn that how parents respond to these differences can either help — or hinder — children's growth and development.

THE BIG IDEAS

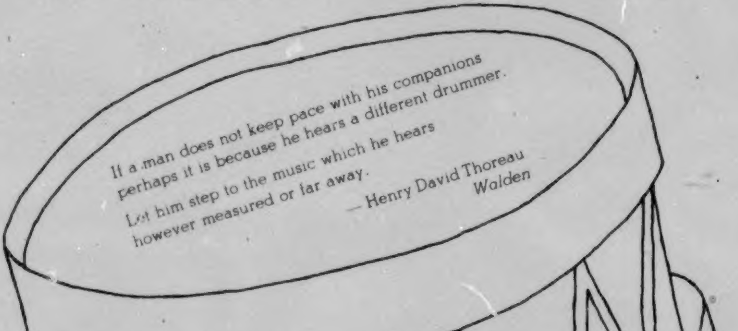
With children, as in all of nature, there is a wide range of normal differences.

This is true both of children's innate characteristics and their acquired ones.

Accepting each child's individuality helps a child accomplish what is possible for him or her.

Rather than trying to be a second-hand version of something he or she is not.

Expecting children to be what they are *not* may hinder them in reaching their unique potential.



If a man does not keep pace with his companions
perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer.
Let him step to the music which he hears
however measured or far away.
— Henry David Thoreau
Walden

The One and Only You

This above all things
To thine own self be true.
-William Shakespeare

I yam what
I yam and
thats all that
I YAM,
-Popeye the Sailorman

You are a unique experiment.

There never has been, and never will be, anyone else quite like you. In your physical, mental and emotional make-up, you are different from everyone else in the world. Just think: out of all the billions of people in the world, your fingerprints are so distinct that the FBI could catch you on that evidence alone. Or, if you didn't leave fingerprints, they could use bloodhounds to track you down by your unique smell.

Bring in an ink pad, and have students make fingerprints and compare them using a magnifying glass.

Because our muscles are different, each of us has a special way of walking, talking, running, and throwing a ball. Because we have minds of our own, we vary in our ability to use language, add and subtract, and memorize. Because our nerves are strung differently, each of us sees, hears, tastes and feels pain in our own way. We differ in our energy level, sleep pattern, body temperature, interest and talents. In fact:

In virtually every area of human growth, each of us is truly an individual

In his book *You Are Extraordinary,* Roger Williams offers a fascinating and detailed look at how our bodies differ both internally and externally. Diagrams illustrate how organs such as the stomach come in very different shapes and sizes.

A UNIQUE BEGINNING

Human differences arise from two factors: heredity and environment. Your **Heredity** is the set of genes passed down to you from your parents. Your **Environment** is all the people, things and experiences around you. When heredity and environment come together, the result is an "original." Human beings are not assembly line products. The variety among us is infinite.

> *. . . life's experiences play on these initial inborn differences. We are the only child, the middle one; the first boy; the "war baby"; rich, poor; minority, majority; slum child; favored child. With inborn differences and imposed differences, each child leads a different life. No event is ever the same for any two children.*
>
> — James L. Hymes. *The Child Under Six.* Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1974.

Students in the class with a background or interest in biology might be able to share more information about our genetic inheritance.

The chances that two children with the same parents will inherit the same combination of genes is about 1 in 32 trillion. Parents can see differences right from birth. Some babies are quiet, others cry a lot. Some babies persist in going after what they want. Others lose interest more quickly. Some sleep all night and eat at regular times. Others wake up hungry at different times every day and night.

From the very beginning, children demand to be seen and treated as individuals.

In *Your Child is a Person,* Stella Chess, Alexander Thomas and Herbert Birch report nine ways in which children differ from birth in their temperamental characteristics:

- activity level
- regularity
- approach or withdrawal
- distractibility
- adaptability to change in routine
- threshold level or sensitivity
- positive or negative mood
- intensity of reaction
- persistence and attention span

IN THEIR OWN TIME

Children continue to express their individuality as they grow. Each child has a special timetable for growth. Some children walk at 9 months, others at 18 months. Many children can speak several hundred words by the time they're 2. But some know a lot more, and others are just beginning to talk. Some children learn to share and play with other children very easily. Others are slower to reach out to new people.

Have students think of examples from among their own brothers and sisters and other children they know.

All of these children are normal. The range of normal growth is very wide, and has room for many kinds of behaviors.

Of course this does not mean that there's no such thing as being abnormal. Some growth deviations are extreme and may have treatable causes. If a child seems unusually slow in one or more areas of development, it would be a good idea to see a doctor.

There are, of course, many reasons why a child may be slow to develop. The child may not be receiving enough stimulation (see unit on *The Need for Early Stimulation*) or encouragement to learn (see *Competence*). The child may have been premature or ill, or there may be another physiological problem. Or, it just may be the child's rate of growing. In any case, when in doubt it is always best to get professional advice.

Another way to get across the idea of the range of normal growth is to use the example of the *bell curve*. While more people tend to fall near the center on bell curves, those who fall near the ends are not abnormal — just fewer in number.

SO WHAT'S NORMAL?

Have you ever heard people refer to the "average baby?" Have you ever wondered just who this "average baby" is? To find out, let's look first at what "average" means.

An average is formed by finding the middle point on a range. For example, if we wanted to describe the "average state," we would add the characteristics of all 50 states (such as population and area) and divide by 50. In this way, we would learn that the "average state" has an area of 72,000 miles, a population of 3½ million people, 1200 square miles of lakes, and a highest mountain of 6000 feet.

But do you know of any actual state that meets this description? No. There isn't one. States come as small as Rhode Island and as large as Alaska — as densely populated as New York and as sparsely settled as Nevada — as mountainous as Colorado and as flat as Nebraska.

Even more than with states, there is no such thing as an "average child." Statements such as "the average child walks at 14 months" only point to the middle of a wide range of normal development. Children who walk at 10 or 18 months are as normal as Rhode Island and New York.

A New Star is Born

Life can be looked at as a great moving picture in which each of us is a star. Our parents are the producers, but we serve as our own directors. Like the two children in the film script that follows, we provide parents with clues as to how we want to be treated from the time we are born.

Similar profiles of differences in development are offered in *Infants and Mothers,* by T. Berry Brazelton, and *Your Child is a Person,* by Stella Chess, Alexander Thomas and Herbert Birch.

Note how the children in these profiles influence their environment as much as it influences them.

Let It Roll!

ACT I

Scene 1
Joey is only 3 days old, but already he has a personality of his own.

From the minute he was born, Joey has been quiet and easygoing. After he was delivered, he lay quietly in his crib — even when he was given a shot and washed for the first time!

Now Joey fusses sometimes, but rarely cries. When he's not sleeping, he moves his arms slowly and looks around.

Both the nurses at the hospital and his parents can see that Joey is going to be very easy to please.

Scene 2
Della is also 3 days old, but she is quite different in temperament from Joey.

Even before she was born, Della was very active. She kept her mother awake at night during the last weeks before she was born "bicycling" in her stomach. When she was delivered, she came out crying and kicking.

Della still cries a lot. When she's not crying or sleeping, [illegible]e's in perpetual motion — kicking, squirming, and throwing her arms about. She puts a lot of energy into everything she does.

It's not hard to see that Della is going to make a lot of demands on her parents.

Babies with certain combinations of traits are much harder to care for than others. Della might be classified as such a "difficult" baby. She needs firmness but patience from her parents.

ACT II

Scene 1

Joey is 6 months old now. He's been sleeping through the night and eating at regular times since he was just a few weeks old. When he cries, it's usually because he's hungry or needs his diaper changed. Since he seems to know what he wants, Joey's parents just follow his cues in feeding and caring for him.

Joey still doesn't move around a lot. When his parents try to help him sit up, he just goes limp. Joey's older brother was sitting up by this age, but his parents know there's still plenty of time.

Joey enjoys playing by himself with simple objects like blocks and cups. He loves new experiences. He smiled and cooed when he had his first bath and when he was offered solid food for the first time.

Joey's parents love having such a good-natured child.

Scene 2

At 6 months, Della is still a whirling dervish.

She spends hours doing pushups, and protests loudly if anyone interrupts her. She can sit up by herself, and loves to be held to stand.

Della is not as predictable in other areas, though. She has been sleeping through the night for just a few months now. For the first few months, she woke up 3 or 4 times every night, and napped at different times every day. Sometimes she wanted to eat just an hour after her last feeding; at other times she refused food after 4 hours.

Finally, Della's parents decided to help her adjust to regular living patterns by feeding her only at certain times. They also learned that although she would always spit out new foods at first, she would usually try them if they were offered again.

Della can be difficult, but her parents are proud to have such a lusty child.

Have students pick out other cues that Joey and Della give to show they are individuals.

ACT III

Scene 1

Joey is now a walking, talking child of 2 years.

He didn't start walking by himself until just 6 months ago, but he started talking at the early age of 10 months. He has quite a large vocabulary for his age, and will look at books and talk to himself for hours. He also enjoys talking with his parents, and even with strangers who pass by as he's playing in the yard.

Because he's so regular in his habits, Joey's parents were able to start toilet training him when he was only 20 months old. Since he doesn't always reach out for new things, they try extra hard to give him stimulating toys and activities. Joey accepts these happily.

See unit on *The Need for Early Stimulation.*

His parents delight in his quiet achievements.

Scene 2

By the time she turned 2, Della had been walking for over a year.

Her parents didn't know whether to be glad or sad. They were proud that she developed so quickly. But, on the other hand, her new skill kept them busy trying to keep her out of trouble.

Now that she's 2, Della is determined to do things her own way. She has temper tantrums if anyone tries to interfere with her wishes. Her parents remain calm but firm when this happens.

See unit on *Identity.*

Della dislikes change, and refuses to sit still long enough to use the toliet. Her parents don't push her, knowing that sooner or later she'll decide she's ready.

They continue to enjoy the storehouse of surprises that Della holds for them.

ACT IV

Scene 1

Five years have passed, and Joey has just started kindergarten.

Joey loved school from the first day. Although he sometimes prefers to stand back and watch when the other children play games, he doesn't miss a thing. He can tell his parents everything that happened in school each day.

Joey's early interest in words has continued to grow. He started to read last year. Joey's teacher

Scene 2

Della is in the same class as Joey, and it's interesting to see how different her adjustment to school was.

Della cried and put up a mild fuss on the first day of school. By the end of the week, though, she was starting to make friends.

The other children admire and try to imitate Della's skill on the playground. Most of them can't keep up with her, though. Everyone likes encourages his interest in books, but also makes sure he has opportunities to play with other children and get physical exercise.

She continually marvels at what a sensitive and considerate child Joey is.

Della, even though in her enthusiasm she can be a bit rough sometimes.

It's still hard for Della to sit still very long or concentrate on one task for a long time.

Della's teacher gets quite a kick out of her, although she secretly breathes a sign of relief that not all her pupils are so energetic.

After students have read this section, have them come up with a list of words describing Joey, and one describing Della. How do the two children differ?

YOU CAN'T FIGHT NATURE

People of all ages have recognized and celebrated human differences. In our country, especially, we sing the praises of the rugged individualist. At the same time, though, society sometimes pushes us to be like everyone else. This desire for sameness goes against all the laws of nature.

Have students discuss some of the ways society does this.

Parents, too, sometimes forget the facts of life when it come to their own children. They accept physical differences such as height and hair color. But other kinds of differences — such as abilities and temperament — are not always easy for parents to accept.

Many parents want their children to be "above-average." Others expect their children to be like themselves. Some even want their children to do things they were never able to do themselves.

Ask students to state other reasons why parents push their children.

When children don't develop as expected, parents sometimes push them to do things that are not possible for them. Such efforts prevent children from using their energies to become what they were meant to be. Instead, children may become frustrated -- even give up.

Parents help their children most when they follow the lessons of nature:

DON'T Push Children

If you had a plant that wasn't growing as fast as you'd like, would you pull it to make it grow faster? Of course not. Instead, you'd make sure that plant had everything it needed to grow. You'd know that some plants grow more slowly and flower at different times than others. All the fertilizer in the world is not going to make a poinsetta bloom before Christmas.

Like plants, some children bloom early and some are late bloomers. These differences don't necessarily mean one child is more or less bright than another. It just means they're different.

This is a point that should be emphasized. Early development is often associated with high intelligence, and slow development with low intelligence. Although such a relationship sometimes exists, early development does not necessarily signify later intellectual or physical achievement.

DON'T Compare Children With Others

Have you ever heard a parent say to a child, "Why can't you be more like your brother (or sister or father or cousin or friend)?" This is like saying to a starling: "Why can't you sing more like a nightingale?" It's a useless question.

Not everyone can be first. Or best. Or above average in everything. We all have built-in strengths and weaknesses. We each have a unique contribution to make to the world. Rather than comparing one child with another, it makes much more sense to help them both develop their own special talents.

DO Respond to Children as Individuals

Some plants need bright sunlight. Others wither under too much sun. Some plants must be watered daily. Others die if they're watered more than once a week. And there are some plants that will adapt to almost any conditions. The successful gardener soon learns to respond to the needs of individual plants.

The successful parent, too, is sensitive to differences among children. When parents give children the freedom to be themselves — as Joey's and Della's parents did — they are truly nurturing growth and development.

Unconditional acceptance of children also affects their sense of self-worth. (See unit on *Loving Your Children*.)

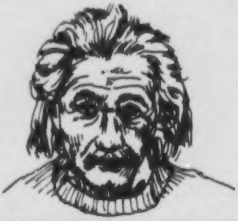
IT'S ALL RELATIVE

Once upon a time in Austria there was a boy who was so quiet in school that his teachers thought he might be retarded. His father was told that it didn't make much difference what the boy decided to do when he grew up, since he couldn't really do anything well. The boy was expelled from high school, but managed to get into a university. His grades there were nothing special.

After graduation the young man went to work in a patent office. His fellow workers liked him, but didn't find him particularly intelligent. Every night this young man went home to think and work. His evening scribblings led to one of the most important discoveries in science: the theory of relativity.

This boy who seemed so thoroughly unremarkable was **Albert Einstein**, one of the world's great geniuses.

Of course, not all late-bloomers are going to become Einsteins. But neither are all early bloomers. The only thing we can be sure of is that we can never be sure. Every child is different.



DO Enjoy Differences

Respecting and prizing children's differences benefits parents as well as children. Parents who don't expect their children to fit into a mold are more comfortable with their children and themselves. They feel less of the anxiety and more of the joy of being a parent.

Many of us have looked with awe at the beauty and variety of snowflakes. We marvel at how each new flake is different from the last. The same miracle takes place every day when a child is born. For mothers and fathers who open their eyes and hearts to this wonder of nature, parenthood can truly be a spring, summer, fall and winter wonderland.

Characters:

Sandy Marshall — *a young mother*
Ted Marshall — *Sandy's husband*
Portia — *Sandy and Ted's 3-year-old daughter*
Marc — *Portia's 5-year-old brother*
Grandpa Wilson — *Sandy's father*
Grandma Wilson — *Sandy's mother*
James Lee — *Sandy's brother*
Raynel — *James Lee's wife*
Mo — *Sandy's brother*
Claudette — *Mo's wife*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

No Comparison

Ted and Sandy Marshall and their two children, Portia and Marc, are at the annual picnic held by Sandy's family, the Wilsons. Sandy and Marc, like the other members of Sandy's family, have always done well at sports. They are looking forward to the games that will take place that day. Ted and Portia, who are not athletically inclined, are less eager.

Portia has a hard time at the picnic. The other children won't let her play ball with them because she can't run fast enough. They call her a "baby" when she won't climb a tall slide. Sandy and Ted disagree about how to help Portia. Sandy urges Portia not to be afraid and to keep on trying. Ted wants Sandy to leave Portia alone.

Finally, Portia takes things into her own hands and runs away. When she is found, she explains that she doesn't like picnics because she can't run fast enough. Sandy finally sees that Portia is not a carbon copy of herself, but an individual with her own interests and abilities.

WHY WAS IT SO IMPORTANT TO SANDY THAT PORTIA PARTICIPATE IN THE FAMILY FUN AND GAMES?

Documentary

The parents of three sets of fraternal twins explain how their children differ from each other in temperament, interests and skills.

Have students discuss how parents of twins can make sure that the children's differences are recognized.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

Do the people in the film treat each other as individuals?

- Or is everyone expected to share the same interests and skills?
- Are there members of the family who do not share these interests and skills? Why are they expected to participate nevertheless?
- How do Sandy and Ted differ in what they expect of Portia?
- Why does Sandy push Portia to participate in physical activities?
- Is Ted more understanding of Portia's situation? Why?

Comments: The Wilsons place a high value on athletic skill and winning, and Portia quickly learns that she is expected to participate in physical activities at the family picnic. Sandy wants Portia to share her enjoyment and success in these activities, so she pushes Portia to join the games and races. Perhaps because he is in a similar situation, Ted is more understanding of Portia's discomfort.

What are the effects of the family's expectations on Ted and Portia?

- What can happen when your interests and skills are different from those of the majority?
- Why did Portia run away?
- Have students even been in, or seen someone else in, a similar situation? What happened?

Comments: The family's expectations affect Portia and Ted in different ways. Ted tries to be a good sport and participate in the games. Portia enjoys playing with the other children, but refuses to be put in a situation where she isn't going to succeed. So she leaves.

How can Sandy and Ted help Portia most?

- Should they encourage her to participate in physical activities? Or should they leave her alone?
- How will Portia ever be able to do these things if they don't push her?
- What should Sandy and Ted do when other children tease Portia or refuse to let her join in their games?
- Is Portia developing normally? Or is she behind in her development? How do you know? How would you compare her development with that of April in *The First Signs of April?*
- Will Portia ever be ready to race? Is it important for her to learn to race?

Comments: Portia enjoys many physical activities. She can run, jump, work at turning cartwheels, and climb over rocks. Although she has not come along as far as some children her age in these areas, she has certainly not tuned out or stopped progressing, as April did.

Children are born with the desire to grow and learn. If Sandy and Ted give Portia opportunities for motor development but let her develop at her own rate, she will continue to enjoy these activities and move toward the upper limits of her potential. If they push her, she may withdraw from these activities.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
WHAT IF . . . ?

Both Joey's and Della's parents accept and enjoy their children as they are. They follow the cues that Joey and Della give.

What might have happened if Joey's and Della's parents were not so sensitive? What might have been the results if . . .

Joey's parents had pushed him to walk before he was ready?

Della's parents expected her to be a girl who was "sugar and spice and everything nice?"

Joey's parents did not provide him with lots of stimulation?

Acting on the cues which children give is not the same as "giving up" because a child seems indifferent or antagonistic to the parents' expectations. There's a fine line between accepting the child as he is and providing support and help to master necessary accomplishments.

Della's parents had tried to toilet train her before she was ready?

activity #2
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Now put yourself in the place of Joey's and Della's parents. In each of the following situations how would you help the other adults understand and work with your child's individuality?

Della is now 1 year old, and you have to be gone for an entire day to attend an out of town wedding. You have hired a babysitter to stay with Della.
What would you tell the babysitter about how to care for Della?

Joey is 4 now, and you have come to pick him up after his third day at nursery school. His teacher mentions that when the class goes outside to play, Joey always looks at leaves and flowers while the other children play games.
How would you respond?

The answers have been filled in.

activity #3
SCRAMBLED WORDS

Children differ from each other in many ways. Unscramble the letters in each of the following words to come up with 10 of these ways.

REDEHTIY	HEREDITY
SCOIBLITIAY	SOCIABILITY
TENTANOIT NAPS	ATTENTION SPAN
GRNEEY	ENERGY
BILATISEI	ABILITIES
PEARNAPACE	APPEARANCE
GULERTIRAY	REGULARITY
TISSENVITIY	SENSITIVITY
ERTA FO OPEMTNEDLEV	RATE OF DEVELOPMENT
NERIVNOTMEN	ENVIRONMENT

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe how children are different from each other. In a day care center, nursery school, Head Start center, or your neighborhood, look for 2 children who are about the same age. Note how each of these children is an individual in his or her:

   physical strength and coordination
   energy level
   verbal skills
   ability to get along with other children
   special interests and talents
   time spent on any one task.

   Write up a paragraph or two on each child describing how they are different.
2. Talk to your parents about how you are different from your brothers and/or sisters. Ask how you differed from each other as babies, as toddlers, as first graders, and at other ages. How do you differ from each other now?
3. Invite an obstetrician, pediatrician or pediatric nurse to talk to your class about how babies differ at birth.
4. With your classmates, make a list of ways that we all differ from each other — physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. Does this list apply to children as well as to adults? Do people become more alike or different as they grow older?

Students could begin by looking at how they differ from each other.

to discuss

1. Think back to your own childhood:

   Did you ever feel uncomfortable because you weren't like other members of your family?
   Did you ever worry that you weren't what your parents expected?
   How did this make you feel?
   How do you think it affected your behavior and growth?
2. Why is it difficult sometimes to accept people as they are? Do you think it will be hard for you to accept the differences among your own children?
3. Do you agree with this statement?

   > to be nobody but myself — in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else — means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight and never stop fighting.
   >
   > — e.e. cummings
   > *A Miscellany*
   > George Firmage, ed.

   What would society be like if everyone were the same? (See *Brave New World*, by Aldous Huxley, and *Animal Farm*, by George Orwell.)
4. Does our educational system adequately take into account individual differences?
5. Do these two African proverbs apply to the theme of human individuality? How?

   The moon moves slowly, but it crosses the town.
   Wood may remain ten years in the water, but it will never become a crocodile.
6. A stereotype is an expectation that all members of a certain group (for example, women or men, black people or white people, college students or construction workers) will act alike:

   How do stereotypes begin?
   How do they interfere with growth and development?
   What can we do to prevent or change stereotypes?
   Have you ever felt stereotyped?

GRAB BAG

to research

1. Studies with identical twins. What do these studies show about how identical twins are like and unlike each other at birth and in later years?

Even identical twins, who developed from the same egg and sperm, and therefore share the same inherited traits, are not exactly alike. Their fingerprints and the tone of their voice may be different, and they often have different experiences. People who become closely acquainted with a pair of identical twins soon learn to tell them apart.

2. The causes of child abuse as they relate to this theme. Is the abuse of some children by their parents related to the parents' lack of awareness about how children differ from

Expecting too much of a child is linked to child abuse. Parents may not be aware that a child cannot meet their expectations, either because of innate temperamental differences or lack of maturity.

3. The ways in which one person's body differs from another's. (See the book *You Are Extraordinary* by Roger Williams.)
4. The wide age ranges associated with some of the skills young children learn — for example, when different children learn to walk, talk, or share toys.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that will give you more information on . . .

. . . how you are an individual

The Individual. Paul Good. New York: Time-Life Books, 1974.

You Are Extraordinary. Roger Williams. New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1969.

. . . how children are different

Infants and Mothers. T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1969. (paperback)

Your Child is a Person. Stella Chess, Alexander Thomas, and Herbert Birch. New York: The Viking Press, 1965. (paperback)

Also: *Three Babies.* Joseph Church. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.

. . . what society would be like if human differences were ignored

Animal Farm. Geoge Orwell. New York: New American Library, 1974. (paperback)

Brave New World. Aldous Huxley. New York: Harper & Row, 1969. (paperback)

THE NEED FOR EARLY STIMULATION: A SENSE OF THE WORLD

The First Signs of April

TO BEGIN...

"As the twig is bent, so the tree will grow."

The importance of the first years of life in laying the foundation for the child's later learning and development is now well known. We also know that it is the child's senses — seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling — that serve as doorways to the child's world.

To begin this unit, have students try to discover the world as a child does. Ask them to:

- *look* at their hands and move them as if they never saw them before
- close their eyes and *listen* to different sounds — paper crumpling, an object dropping, etc.
- shut their eyes and *smell* different things — chalk, coffee, etc.
- *move* around, *taste* and *touch* things.

FROM THE EDITORS

All normal children come into the world with all the equipment they need to learn: their five senses. Given the freedom and encouragement to use these senses, children will continue to learn for the rest of their lives.

In this booklet you will learn how children use their senses to learn about the world, and why the first years of life are such a critical time for this exploration. You will also read about some different ways parents can enhance their children's first learning experiences.

THE BIG IDEAS

- Children need to have all their senses stimulated during the first years of life in order to develop to their full potential.
- Children learn through contact with many different stimuli, including people, objects and activities.
- Some of the most important ways of providing young children with stimulation are touching, holding, playing, talking and reading.

Did You Know That . . .

...Babies begin to learn right at birth?
...Babies are able to see and hear from the time they are born?
...Children learn as much in the first 4 years of life as they will in the next 13?

You're Never too Young to Learn

> If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children, I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life. . .
>
> — Rachel Carson
> *A Sense of Wonder*

Many people think that newborn babies do nothing but lie in their cribs all day waiting to be fed or diapered. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. Babies are hard at work during most of their waking hours.

From the time they are born, children are able to learn and eager to do so.

A SENSITIVE ISSUE

In the first years of life children go about learning through their senses — seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching. This arousal and feeding of the senses is call **Sensory Stimulation**.

Watch young children to see how they use their senses to learn about themselves and the people and things around them.

Have students give other examples of how they've seen young children explore the world with their senses.

Children study new objects or people and eagerly reach out with their eyes, mouths and feet. Crawling babies are apt to head for any object in sight and examine it by handling it and putting it in their mouths. Even their babbles show clearly that they have been listening very closely to the conversations around them.

Children use their senses in these ways to move ahead in all areas of growth — emotional, social, physical and intellectual. Young babies develop emotional security by feeling the warmth of their parents' bodies and hearing the sound of their voices. Children learn about colors, sizes and shapes by looking at and playing with such toys as crib mobiles or the contents of the grocery cart. By reaching for and grabbing nearby objects, they develop physical strength and coordination.

Preschool children are tremendously active. In one experiment, a trained athlete tried to imitate the movements and activities of a 2-year-old. The athlete had to give up — exhausted.

As young children gather information in these ways, they begin to make sense out of the world around them.

When they are not given the opportunity to use their senses, they become understimulated — like April in the film.

There are critical periods for physical, emotional and intellectual development. Another critical period — the one for forming a bond with the primary caregiver — is discussed in the unit on *Attachment and Independence.*

A CRITICAL TIME

People learn from sensory experiences all their lives. We know now, though, that the human brain is especially responsive to sensory input during the first years of life. These years form a **Critical Period** when the human mind is able to learn especially quickly and easily from sensory stimulation.

Critical periods occur when a part of the human body is growing most rapidly. Since the growth of the brain is most rapid in the early years of life, these years form a critical period for the development of the mind.

While it is never too late to learn, many experts now believe that the lack of sensory experiences in the early years can never be fully made up. Later attempts to make up for what was missed in the critical period usually take much more time and effort. They may not always be successful.

A CRITICAL PERSON

The persons who are usually closest to children during this important learning period are their parents. Parents, therefore, play a vital role in creating children's first learning experiences and laying the foundations for their future growth.

In fact, parents have been called children's first teachers, and the home their first school.

We are not the first generation to recognize how the young child learns. Look at what Walt Whitman had to say back in 1855 about how young children "absorb" the world through their senses.

Maria Montessori also referred to the young child's "absorbent mind."

There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became,
And that object became part of him for the day or a certain part of the day,
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.
— Walt Whitman, "There Was A Child Went Forth" (1855), *Leaves of Grass*

JEAN PIAGET AND THE CHILD'S MIND

Jean Piaget (Pya-zhā) is a Swiss pychologist who has spent more than 50 years studying the intellectual growth of children. His work forms the basis for much of our present knowledge about the way a child's mind develops. Many of his ideas came from carefully observing his own three children over a period of many years.

Piaget calls the first few years of life, when children learn mainly through their senses, the **Sensori-motor Period**. During this period, says Piaget, children learn by interacting with their **Environment** — the people and things around them. By acting on new things and experiences in the environment, children's minds grow and change.

See Piaget's *Origins of Intelligence* for more detailed description of the Sensori-Motor Period.

Imagine, for example, a baby named Tracy who sees a rattle for the first time. If Tracy is like most babies, she will be curious about the rattle. She will try to grab the rattle so that she can examine it. In doing this, she will use several skills. She will use her eyes to judge how far to reach. She will coordinate her arms and fingers to reach out and pick up the rattle.

Tracy will also learn some new things. She will find out how light the rattle is, and how its shape feels. As she holds it, she will find out that it makes noise. In these ways, Tracy will learn that rattles are objects that make noise when you shake them. Her picture of the world will be expanded to include this new information.

As one Chinese proverb says:
I hear, and I forget
I see, and I remember
I do, and I understand.

THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF DOING, TRACY'S MIND WILL HAVE CHANGED AND GROWN.

An Everyday Experience

> If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder . . . he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in . . .
>
> — Rachel Carson
> *A Sense of Wonder*

Learning is a pleasure for young children. They are born with an enormous curiosity, and they eagerly set out to explore and master as much of the world as possible.

It is parents' joy and privilege to be able to introduce children to this world. Fortunately, this is not difficult. Stimulation of the senses can take place during daily activities like feeding and dressing. It can even help make routine tasks more enjoyable for both parents and children.

This means that working parents, too, have opportunities to provide their children with sensory experiences. The quality of the stimulation is at least as important as the quantity.

Nor do parents need a lot of money or expensive toys or equipment to provide their children with adequate stimulation. Many of the most effective and enjoyable children's toys are objects commonly found in the home. Mirrors, sets of pots and pans, and large boxes for crawling in and out of are some good examples.

Other toys can be made from inexpensive materials. A crib mobile can be made by dangling wooden spoons, balls, bells or bright pieces of cloth from a piece of sturdy string. In addition, many libraries and schools now operate toy lending libraries for families.

Parents can help their children grow and learn about the world in a number of ways.

CREATE A STIMULATING ENVIRONMENT

In order to develop skills, children need lots of practice. Parents can provide this practice through the way they interact with children and the kinds of toys and materials they provide. For example, parents can talk and read to their children from the time they are born. Most parents have many opportunities to do this during their daily contacts with the children. They can name parts of the body while dressing or bathing children, or describe smells and tastes while feeding them. They can talk about what they are doing while cooking or cleaning house, or point out familiar objects in picturebooks.

Parents can also help their children learn by providing them with a wide variety of objects and toys to play with. Objects of different smells, sizes, shapes, sounds, colors and textures will stimulate all of the senses.

Have students discuss how this can be done safely. See "To Discuss" Question #2 in the Grab Bag.

GIVE CHILDREN THE FREEDOM TO DISCOVER THE WORLD ON THEIR OWN

Because they seem so helpless, parents sometimes try to protect babies by doing everything for them. When they do this, parents deprive children of chances for stimulation and growth. It is a good idea to let children do lots of things for themselves. Children learn by trial and error.

Children also learn by being physically active. Parents should let children move about freely in safe areas of the home and yard whenever possible. In this way, most children will discover many opportunities to smell, taste, listen, touch, grasp, climb, stack and crawl under and into.

Parents may also find that there are ways they can arrange their homes so that children can do more things for themselves. They might put children's toys on a low shelf, for example, or hang clothes hooks at a lower level.

Also, parents can provide stepstools for reaching the sink and dresser drawers, and make or buy some furniture that is child-sized.

RESPOND TO CHILDREN'S CUES

Children give many signs that they are ready to learn. They babble and get excited, reach out and smile. By observing their children's behavior, parents can learn to recognize and respond to these cues. These signs are clues to what skills children are trying to learn.

Responding to children's cues can be as easy and natural as repeating and playing with sounds that a baby makes. Or, it could be talking to a 3 year-old about an activity in which he or she has shown a special interest.

Through observation parents can also see when children are not ready to learn. Children learn best when their level of interest is high. Thirty seconds of talking with children about something in which they are involved will be much more profitable than talking to them for five minutes about something in which they are not interested.

Timing, then, is very important.

Children can be overstimulated, though. If they are given too much stimulation, or if it is given at a time when they are not ready for it, children will tune it out.

On the next page are some activities that can provide children with stimulation at different ages. Parents who try out these activities find that their own lives are enriched, for they are able to expand their own senses through those of their children.

They are able to reawaken their own "sense of wonder."

The Developing Child

This chart lists some of the things children can do at different ages, and some ways parents can help them learn at each stage of growth. Although children usually show behaviors in the order in which they are listed on this chart, children differ in the age at which they show each behavior. For example, many children take their first steps at 12 months. However, a child may start walking at 7 or 15 months and still be well within the normal range. Therefore, the ages listed on this chart are only approximate.

Be sure students understand this. See the unit on *Children's Individuality*.

AT AGE...	CHILDREN MAY BE...	PARENTS CAN...
0-6 months	...learning to follow moving objects with their eyes ...starting to reach for objects ...babbling and playing with sounds ...responding to human voices	...put the baby on a pad on the floor so it is easy to move about freely ...suspend bright objects to look and grab at over the crib ...pick up children's sounds and repeat them ...put brightly colored and patterned pictures and objects in the room ...provide touching, tasting and reaching experiences ...talk to children about things around them ...sing to children
6-12 months	...crawling and sitting without support ...holding and manipulating objects ...imitating the sounds and rhythms of human speech ...understanding their first words ...learning to stand alone	...encourage reaching and crawling by putting brightly colored objects just beyond their reach ...let children crawl and explore inside and outdoors on the grass ...provide a variety of objects to touch, hold, shake and bang ...continue to talk to children as much as possible and begin reading simple stories to them
12-18 months	...throwing or dropping objects and watching them fall ...beginning to speak their first words ...beginning to walk	...provide containers and other household objects that they can stack, nest inside each other, or drop objects into ...name different objects that they are touching or looking at, or that appear in books ...give them objects of different shapes to handle ...continue to read and talk to them and encourage their efforts to speak

AT AGE...	CHILDREN MAY BE...	PARENTS CAN...
18-24 months	...creeping upstairs ...throwing and kicking objects ...developing better coordination of their fingers ...putting on and removing simple garments ...beginning to feed themselves ...rapidly expanding their vocabulary	...encourage children to do those things they can begin to do for themselves, like eating and dressing ...provide paper and crayons for scribbling ...carry on short conversations with children and ask simple questions
2-3 years	...becoming much more physically active ...expressing a desire to be independent and do things themselves ...asking questions like "why?" or "what's that?"	...help children perform as many tasks as they are able, like carrying objects and liquids to the table ...begin taking them on short trips, such as to the pet store or on a bus ride ...let them get outdoors a lot ...continue reading to children, including children's poetry
3-5 years	...developing the strength and coordination to perform many household activities ...becoming very talkative ...using complete sentences and showing a knowledge of language rules ...showing an interest in fantasy and make believe	...give children responsibility and opportunity to do as many things as they can in the household ...give children opportunities to talk, and help them put their feelings into words ...let children choose some of their own books from the library ...provide play experiences with other children ...give them toys they can take apart and build with

Characters:

Sheila Hornbrenner — *a young working mother*
Bob Hornbrenner — *Sheila's ex-husband*
April Hornbrenner — *the 1-year-old daughter of Sheila and Bob*
Bob Hall — *Sheila's date*
Mrs. Meyer — *Sheila's babysitter*
Bonnie Hornbrenner — *Bob's mother*
Neil & Jill Hornbrenner — *April's 1- and 2-year-old cousins*
Marilyn — *Sheila's co-worker and friend*
Marilyn's 3 children

FILM REVIEW SECTION

First Signs of April

Sheila and Bob Hornbrenner are recently divorced and have a 1-year-old daughter named April. We see April engaged in many different activities with her parents: grocery shopping; doing the laundry; visiting other children; and being fed and changed. But we also see that Sheila and Bob never get directly involved with April. They do not talk with her, or encourage her to try new things.

As the program develops it becomes clear that April is behind in most things. She doesn't talk, show curiosity about people or things, move around, or even stand up on her own. Sheila and Bob finally realize that April has an important need that is not being met. As the program ends, Sheila seeks out the advice of her friend Marilyn, who is a more experienced parent.

IF YOU WERE IN MARILYN'S PLACE, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SHEILA?

Documentary:

Dr. J. Ronald Lally of Syracuse University explains how parents can help children use their senses to learn. He advises parents to:

- watch their children to see what interests them
- provide experiences for sensory learning
- talk to their children
- encourage them to feel, touch and explore with their senses.

How does Dr. Lally's advice apply to Sheila and Bob?

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

What was wrong with April?

- How can students tell something was wrong?
- How aware was April of her environment?
- How did she respond to other children and adults? To new objects? To new places and events?
- How does April's behavior compare with that of her cousin and with Marilyn's children?

Comments: April is not receiving the amount or type of sensory stimulation she needs to move ahead at this point in her development. Her lack of awareness of the people and things around her is evident from her lack of:

- response to people who talk to her
- curiosity about objects in her environment
- any sounds other than crying
- physical movement
- ability to feed herself.

How did April's understimulation happen?

- Don't Sheila and Bob care about April?
- What did Sheila think were April's needs?
- How did she attempt to provide for these needs?
- How did Bob interact with April?
- How did the babysitter contribute to April's problem?
- Is April's understimulation related to the fact that Sheila works? To the divorce?

Comments: Understimulation is not necessarily the result of a divorce or separation. The same things might have happened with April if her parents had remained together. Single parents are as well equipped to provide their children with adequate stimulation as couples. Nor should children suffer from understimulation because both their parents work.

April's need is not due, either, to lack of love on the part of her parents. April's understimulation is simply a result of her parents' lack of knowledge about the young child's sensory needs. Although not intentional, their lack of attention to this aspect of April's development amounts to neglect.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Based on what you've learned from this program and booklet, how would you reply to the following letters?

Dear Editor:

I've been reading about how important it is to give young children lots of stimulation. I'd like to do this, but I don't have the money to buy educational toys. What should I do?

Signed,
Concerned

Dear Concerned:

Dear Editor:

My wife says that we should talk to our 1-month-old daughter about the things we do around her. This seems silly to me since she can't understand us. Which of us is right?

Signed,
Confused

Dear Confused:

activity #2
LEARNING THROUGH EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

Here are some activities that most families do. For each one, list things parents can say or do to encourage children to use their senses. At the end, add your own ideas for other good learning opportunities.

Inside the Home

Feeding a child
Cooking
Dressing a child
Cleaning the house
Other: ____________________

Outside the Home

Walking in a park or field
Riding in a bus or car
Shopping for groceries
Going to the doctor
Other: ____________________

For example:

- let infants and toddlers *move freely* about on the grass
- encourage children to *feel* textures such as bark and *smell* things such as flowers
- *name* objects such as trees or puddles
- *listen* with children to birds, frogs, and other sounds.

The answers have been filled in.

activity #3
PUZZLE YOUR WAY TO PARENTHOOD

1 E	N	2 V	I	R	3 O	N	4 M	E	N	5 T	■	6 P	O	T	7 S
M	■	I	■	■	N	■	O	■	■	O	■	I	■	■	T
O	■	S	■	■	E	■	8 B	A	9 B	Y	■	A	■	■	I
10 T	R	I	A	L	■	■	I	■	A	■	11 A	G	E	■	M
I	■	O	■	■	■	■	L	■	L	■	■	E	■	■	U
12 O	W	N	■	13 I	N	14 T	E	15 L	L	E	C	T	U	A	L
N	■	■	■	■	■	A	■	O	■	■	■	■	■	■	A
A	■	■	16 C	17 O	O	L	■	W	■	18 P	A	R	E	N	T
19 L	E	A	R	N	■	K	■	E	■	L	■	■	■	■	E
■	■	■	I	■	■	■	■	20 R	E	A	21 D	■	■	■	D
22 T	A	S	T	E	■	23 G	■	■	■	24 Y	E	A	R	25 S	■
O	■	■	I	■	26 C	R	I	27 B	S	■	A	■	■	E	■
28 T	O	U	C	H	■	O	■	O	■	■	29 D	O	I	N	G
■	■	■	A	■	■	30 W	O	R	L	D	■	■	■	S	■
31 S	M	E	L	L	S	■	■	N	■	■	■	32 C	U	E	S

Across

1. We all learn by interacting with our ________.
6. Some of the best toys for children are common household objects like ________.
8. A ________ is born with all of his or her senses working.
10. Children learn by ________ and error.
11. There are many different activities that parents can do to provide children with stimulation at every ________.
12. Children learn more when parents let them try things out on their ________.
13. Children use their senses to move ahead in all areas of growth -- social, emotional, physical and ________.
16. Parents help their children learn about the world when they compare objects that are warm and ________.
18. The ________ is the child's first teacher.
19. Through sensory stimulation children begin to ________ about the world they live in.
20. Parents who ________ to their children provide an important source of stimulation.
22. Very young children use their sense of ________ to learn about their world.
24. We know now that the first ________ of life are probably the most important.
26. Babies can learn even when they are lying in their ________.
28. An important way of stimulating young children is through their sense of ________.
29. Children's minds grow through the act of ________.
30. Children use their senses to learn about the ________.
31. Feeding time offers children a chance to learn from the many different ________ they are experiencing.
32. Children give parents ________ when they are ready to learn.

Down

1. Being held and rocked stimulates children's ________ growth.
2. The sense of ________ helps babies learn to recognize their mother and father.
3. Many ________-year-old children like to drop objects and watch them fall.
4. A ________ is a good toy for a baby to play with while in a crib.
5. To be good, a ________ does not have to be expensive.
6. ________ is one of the leading experts on how a child's mind develops.
7. Children need to have all their senses ________ in order to develop to their full potential.
9. Putting a brightly colored ________ just beyond their reach will encourage children to reach and crawl.
14. Parents should ________ to their children from the time they are born.
15. Parents can help children do things for themselves by hanging clothes hooks at a ________ level.
16. Those times when parts of the human body are growing most rapidly are called ________ periods.
17. One-year-old children like to stack things ________ top of one another.
18. When children ________ they are learning as well as having fun.
21. Up until the time we are ________, we use our senses to learn.
22. It is possible to give a child (or a ________) too much stimulation.
23. Parents do not need a lot of money to help their children learn and ________.
25. April did not have many opportunities to use each ________.
27. Babies are able to learn as soon as they are ________.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe a child in a day care center, nursery school, Head Start Center, or home. Watch the child for at least 30 minutes, and keep a record of:
   what the child does
   what senses he or she uses
   what she or he seems to learn
   what opportunities there are in the environment for the child to learn
   what the parents or teachers do to help the child learn
   what other learning activities you would recommend.
2. Plan an activity or bring in a toy or common household object that can help children learn through one of their senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, or smell. Try out the activity or toy with a child, and explain to the class:
   what sense(s) the object or toy can stimulate
   for what age child the toy might be best suited
   what happened when the toy or object was given to the child.

See units on *Play and Fantasy* and *Creativity* for guidelines to choosing toys.

3. Do a survey of toys displayed in department stores and toy stores. Look for toys that would provide children with sensory stimulation. Make a list of those toys that you would include in a toy lending library for preschool children.
4. Look through magazines, newspapers, and other printed materials for pictures of young children whose senses are being stimulated by people, objects or activities. Discuss the pictures with your classmates, and combine them into a collage or other display.
5. Put together a book of experiences — activities, games, trips, etc. — which encourage the use of the senses.
6. Visit a Montessori school. How do the materials there help children learn through their senses?

to discuss

1. What would you do as a parent to make your home safe for children to explore?
2. You are a working parent who must hire a babysitter for your 2-year-old child. What instructions would you give the sitter for enriching the time spent with your child?
3. Recall a moment in your life that was full of sensations — for example, a ride in a roller-coaster, your first kiss, or being knocked down by a wave at the beach. In what ways did this experience differ from reading about roller coasters or young love or the beach? What does this imply for raising and educating children?

Learning to Learn in Infancy, Series III, Vassar Films for Project Head Start. 16mm, b&w, sound, 30 min. $11.00 rental from New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Place, New York, New York 10003. This film describes and illustrates Piaget's theories on the sensori-motor period.

to research

1. Jean Piaget and his theories about the sensori-motor period.

2. The importance of critical periods, both before and after birth. (Look also under: imprinting; sensitive periods; embryology; teratology; and developmental tasks.)

Students might enjoy seeing *Rock-a-bye Baby,* a 16mm, color, sound, 35 min. film. Available from Time-Life Films, 43 West 16th Street, New York, New York 10011. The effects of depriving animals and young children of stimulation of the sense of touch are strikingly illustrated in this film.

See Muriel Beadle's *A Child's Mind.*

3. How the brain grows with sensory stimulation.
4. How parents respond to their infants in other cultures. Looking at other cultures can help us better understand our own needs and behaviors. Some of the cultures you might study are the Hopi Indians, the Eskimos, the Foré of New Guinea, and the Tasaday of the Phillipines.

See: Kenneth MacLeish, "Stone Age Cavemen of Mindinao." *National Geographic*, Vol. 142, No. 2, August, 1972 (pp. 219-249). This article on the recently discovered Tasaday tribe of the Philippines includes many photographs of children interacting with adults and the environment.

See: Richard E. Sorenson, "Growing up as a Foré is to be 'in touch' and 'free'." *Smithsonian*, Vol. 8, No. 2, May, 1977 (pp. 107-114). This article is about a tribe of people in New Guinea who give their young children unusual freedom to explore the world.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . how children learn

A Child's Mind. Muriel Beadle. New York: Doubleday, 1970. (paperback)

Your Child's Intellect. T.H. Bell, Salt Lake City: Olympus Publishing Company, 1972. (paperback)

New Parent's Guide to Early Learning. Sara B. Stein. New York: New Academy Library, 1976. (paperback)

Also: *The Origins of Intelligence in Children.* Jean Piaget. New York: International University Press, 1952, (paperback)

and

The Absorbent Mind. Maria Montessori. New York: Delta (paperback)

and

The Sense of Wonder. Rachel Carson. New York: Harper & Row, 1956. (paperback)

. . . learning experiences for children

Baby To Parent, Parent to Baby. Ira J. Gordon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977. (paperback)

I Saw a Purple Cow and 100 Other Recipes for Learning. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1972. (paperback)

PREPARING FOR PARENTHOOD: TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Two to Get Ready

TO BEGIN...

Not too long ago, the father paced the hospital floor, while the mother faced childbirth alone. Later on the father went to work while the mother faced the job of raising children alone. "Parenting," at that time, was synonymous with "mothering."

Now it's a different story. Fathers opt to take part in childbirth and child care. As a result, the lives of children, mothers and fathers are much richer for this.

Preparation for parenthood is now seen as getting both parents ready — not only for birth, but for what comes after.

You might introduce students to this unit by asking them to decide whether the following are true or false:

- Only expectant mothers need to get ready for the birth of a baby;
- Couples who are expecting a baby feel closer and happier than they ever did before;
- Babies can become as attached to fathers as to mothers;
- Preparation for parenthood begins when you are expecting a baby.

FROM THE EDITORS

In one sense, both parents are pregnant. The woman bears the child, of course, but both parents bear new feelings. The birth of a baby is also the birth of a parent — the start of a new way of life and the beginning of new responsibilities.

This booklet is about the ways parents prepare for parenthood. It focuses on their psychological preparation. You will learn that this preparation begins when you are born and intensifies when you are expecting a baby. We hope it will help you think about the reasons for having a baby as well as the decision about when to have it. You'll learn about many emotions parents have during pregnancy. You'll also find out ways to resolve these feelings and prepare for the birth of the child and the role of a parent.

THE BIG IDEAS

- Preparation for parenthood means getting ready, both physically and psychologically, for the birth of a child.
- This preparation starts when we are children and intensifies when we are about to have children of our own.
- It's natural for expectant parents to have mixed feelings before the child is born.

Some expectant parents aren't prepared for this. They expect to feel happier and closer than ever before.

- The whole family benefits when parents share feelings, obtain birth and baby care information, and make decisions before the baby is born.

Birth is not one act.
It is a process.
— *Erich Fromm*

BEFORE THE FACT

You may gasp at the thought of having a baby of your own: Me, a parent? What do I know about being a parent?

Actually, more than you suspect.

Preparation for parenthood starts long before you even begin to think of having children of your own. The process began when you were a child. That's when you started to form attitudes toward children and parents. Your first ideas about what it's like to be a father or mother probably came from watching your own parents. The way you feel toward children today may stem from your parents' attitudes as well as your own experiences caring for younger brothers, sisters or neighborhood children.

And that's just half of the preparation. For better or worse, you have been caring for your body in ways that will affect both the health of your baby and your ability to cope with the physical demands of caring for a tiny child.

According to the "Key Issues in Infant Mortality" report by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, it's important for young girls and women to be in good health many years before they become pregnant. According to statistics, the primary reason for unpreventable deaths of infants was that the mother had a serious medical problem before pregnancy began.

TO HAVE OR HAVE NOT

Now that you have reached child-bearing age, you may have already started to think about having children — when to have them, or whether to have them at all. This is the first decision you face in preparing for parenthood.

A group of friends share their decisions in the scene below.

Time: 7:30 PM
Scene: Class reunion dinner
Place: Fertile Valley High School

Yvonne: *"Carla, you mean you've got a baby? Wow, you must be kidding!"*

Carla: *"Nope, it's for real. More than real. You know, our class reunion is the event of the month for me! I never get out and see anybody anymore. Sometimes I am so tired from feeding the baby at night, I don't even have the energy to go to the store!"*

Charlie: *"Yeah, it's tough at first. But soon you begin to enjoy yourselves and your baby more and more. I take Kevin to all the games. And we sit up there in the bleachers. Eating popcorn. Hot dogs. All that good stuff."*

Paul: *"It sounds OK, man. And maybe someday I'll have one of my own. But not now. I've got things to do and places to go before I settle down. And it takes money to do that. I can't be buying diapers and bigwheels now. I want my freedom. I'm going to go where I want and when I want."*

Yvonne: *"Sounds like you're not going to have any ties for a while — to a woman or a baby. You sound just like my husband when we were first married. Lots of talk about freedom. We were no more ready to have a kid then than you are now. I guess readiness is all."*

Donna: *"You're right about that. I don't even want a baby now. I'm trying to get somewhere in my career and I just don't have time to devote to a baby. Especially with my traveling. Maybe, when I'm 30 or something, I'll change my mind."*

Kadith: *"Well at least you can decide whether or not you want to have a baby. Today, with birth control, we've got a choice."*

Ask students to discuss what effect birth control has had on families.

The decision about whether or when to have a baby is an important one. It's a step that changes your responsibilities, daily schedule and outlook on life.

WHY WOULD YOU HAVE A BABY?

_______ To prove you're a mature sexual man or woman?
_______ To have somebody to love and love you?
_______ To support and comfort you in old age?
_______ To experience being pregnant?
_______ To express your love for each other?
_______ To give you some purpose in life?

WHAT ARE SOME OTHER REASONS THAT PEOPLE DECIDE TO HAVE A BABY?

Others might include:

- to get married
- to get the person you love to love you more
- to pass on the family name
- to have the experience of raising a child

MIXED FEELINGS

Once the baby is on the way, most people, even those who have wanted and planned a baby, have mixed feelings. You may be:

Eager to Start a Family, But Angry About Interrupting a Career

I love kids. And I've always wanted to have a baby.
But not now. I just got out of school. I just began a job. I travel and I see a lot of people. I'm given a lot of responsibility. I hate to quit.

Excited About "Showing," But Depressed About Being Big and Clumsy

I didn't feel like I really had a baby inside me until now. Chip is more involved now, too, because he can feel the baby and see my belly grow.
But some days I am so tired. My back hurts. I worry about getting varicose veins. I want to get rid of this big stomach and run through the park again.

Overjoyed to Feel the Baby Move, But Afraid of Giving Birth

It's incredible to feel the baby stir inside you. I can't wait to see whether it's a boy or a girl.
But sometimes I have nightmares about giving birth. In one, the baby comes out all deformed. In the other, the labor goes on and on. I'm slipping down a hole and George is holding onto my arms and telling me to breathe.

Excited About Being a Father, But Nervous About Changing a Life Style

I keep thinking about the things the kid and I will do together — such as watching the trains go by and going to air shows.
What will it be like to have a child? Will we have any time for ourselves? Will we be able to make love when we feel like it or decide to go camping at the last minute? What about our social life? Will our friends stop dropping by? Will it be hard to find a babysitter? I hope our life doesn't change entirely.

Proud of Being a Parent, But Feeling Like a Kid

We were so excited when we found out that Barbara was pregnant. We called up our parents right away. They were really excited too. This will be their first grandchild! Then we told our friends. Telling folks was fun.
But sometimes I still can't believe we're going to have a baby and I'm going to be a father. I don't feel like I'm old enough to carry a kid around and worry about how to buy him shoes and send him to school.

In what way might the experience of having a child affect one's sense of identity?

These feelings are natural. And they're not surprising. For pregnancy brings drastic changes to which both parents must adjust — changes in the woman's appearance and moods, decisions to make, and new concerns such as:

"Will I be a good father?"
"Will I know what to do with the baby?"
"Will we be able to pay for all this?"

These feelings are normal, but they shock people who have been told only the joys and none of the discomforts of pregnancy. Sometimes these feelings put a strain on a couple's relationship. It may be hard to share feelings and difficult to see the other's point of view. On the other hand, it's possible for pregnancy to be a time when a couple feels closer than they've felt before.

What joys or discomforts of pregnancy have students been told?

Your experience during pregnancy depends largely on how you prepare for your child and your new way of life.

A Time of Change

When you find out that you're expecting a baby, there's a lot you can do to meet the challenges and savor the joys that pregnancy brings:

ACCEPT AND SHARE YOUR FEELINGS

Pregnancy is a time when you need support — a chance to talk through your feelings with someone who cares. This person could be: your spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend; a good friend; your parents; or a professional such as a doctor, marriage counselor, psychologist or minister.

In *Preparing for Parenthood* Dr. Lee Salk describes a former patient who felt so guilty about having ambivalent feelings that she never expressed or resolved them. Later, she became an overprotective mother as she overcompensated for her guilt.

What kinds of support are available for the unmarried pregnant woman?

It helps to share your feelings. Sometimes talking to another person can help you better understand your feelings as you change and adjust during the pregnancy. Sharing your feelings with the baby's other parent often prevents misunderstandings. It can draw you closer together.

Sharing feelings prevents misunderstandings like Hunter's and Laura's in *Two to Get Ready.*

LEARN ABOUT PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND PARENTHOOD

During childhood and up until the time of pregnancy, most people pick up general information about pregnancy, birth and parenthood. When two people are about to become a father and mother, however, they need more specific information on each of these subjects:

pregnancy:

Learning how the fetus grows is fascinating to most people, but particularly so to expectant fathers and mothers. Understanding what is happening to the baby and the mother's body has helped many parents relax and enjoy the pregnancy more. It has also helped them see why proper food, rest, exercise, and medical care for the mother is so important.

Our Bodies, Ourselves discusses both the physical changes and emotions that many women experience during each trimester of pregnancy. (See Book Browsing.)

birth:

Today, parents are demanding more and more choice in: the method of childbirth; the environment where the baby is given birth and care; and the amount of participation that fathers and other children in the family may have in the birth experience.

You may want to inquire about your options early in the pregnancy so you can contact the appropriate medical people and birth place. Many new parents go to the hospital to become familiar with the maternity ward and the ways things happen there.

parenthood:

Learning how young children grow and develop helps expectant parents feel more confident and competent. You can: read books on child development; observe children of various ages in child care centers; babysit or talk with other parents to learn to care for your baby. It's also a good idea to stop by the nursery to see what newborns look like.

MAKE DECISIONS BEFORE THE BABY IS BORN

The months of pregnancy can be more than a time of waiting for the baby to be born. They can be a time to make important decisions about what you want your baby to experience at birth and afterwards. Here are some decisions most expecfant couples face and some of the choices available to them:

Method of birth

Do you and your doctor feel the best way for you to deliver your baby is:
- "prepared" childbirth using breathing and exercises?
- partial use of sedatives and other types of drugs?
- general anesthesia?
- Caesarian section?

Community Services

Will you seek information and support through:
- childbirth classes?
- specialized support groups such as those for Caesarian section and breast feeding?
- books and films at your public library?
- other services in your community such as those listed under "Social Service Organizations" in the Yellow Pages?

See unit on *Societal Support.*

Preparing Older Children

Will you help the other children in your family get used to a new baby by:
- telling them the news when you tell everyone else?
- waiting until they notice and ask about the pregnancy?
- showing them books and films about human and animal births?
- involving them in preparation such as buying baby clothes?
- showing them pictures of themselves when they were babies?

Birthplace

Do you want your baby to be born at:
- a hospital delivery room?
- birthing center?
- clinic?
- home?

Naming the Baby

Will you choose a name based on its:
- meaning?
- family, religious or cultural origin?

Feeding the Baby

Do you prefer to:
- breast feed?
- bottle feed?

Prenatal Care and Delivery

Will you and the baby be cared for by a:
- general practitioner?
- obstetrician/pediatrician?
- nurse-midwife?
- pool of doctors at a clinic?

Raising the Baby

Will you care for and raise your baby based on:

- what your parents did?
- babysitting experiences?
- observations in child care centers?
- child development books?

Sleeping Arrangements

Based on the space in your house or apartment, will it be most comfortable for the baby to be:

- in a room of its own?
- with another child?
- in your room?

Going Back to Work

Does the decision about if and when the mother will go back to work depend on:

- your personal needs?
- the baby's needs?
- your financial situation?
- availability of child care?
- availability of work?

Caring for the Baby

Will this be done at different times during the night and day by:

- both of you?
- a relative?
- a babysitter?

Household Chores

Once the baby comes home, will household chores be done by:

- both of you?
- older children?
- a housekeeper?
- a visiting grandparent?
- friends who volunteer help?

Expenses

How much can you afford to pay for:

- hospital fees?
- doctor's fees?
- baby clothing and equipment?

When you take advantage of these months to learn, think about your values, and clarify your feelings, you will find that:

Sharing your feelings helps resolve them.
Basic facts quiet your fears, teach you to care for the health of you and your baby, and reveal the wonder of creation.
Learning about parents and children helps you feel more confident and competent.
Making decisions prepares you better for the changes ahead.

You will be creating not just a child, but the kind of atmosphere and way of life you want for that child.

Characters:

Laura Riley — *a young expectant mother*
Hunter Riley — *Laura's husband*
Terri Lander — *Laura's friend*
Bill Bradley — *Hunter's best friend*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

Two To Get Ready

Hunter and Laura Riley are expecting a baby. Both are nervous, and both are trying to get ready for the baby. Laura wants Hunter to attend childbirth class and shop for baby clothes with her. Hunter, however, wants to earn more money to cope with current and coming expenses. Except for a few brief moments, they quarrel constantly.

Laura shares her feelings with her friend, Terri, and goes shopping for baby things with her. Hunter tells his problems to his friend Bill. Hunter finally decides to attend the childbirth class and finds it deeply moving. Later, he and Laura talk about getting ready for the baby and begin to understand that each has been getting ready for the baby in his or her own way.

Documentary:

Several couples attending a prenatal class led by a registered nurse express their feelings about the impending birth of their child. Both parents-to-be describe the emotional changes that they have gone through and forecast the responsibilities — and pleasures — that await them.

Have the students discuss what kinds of decisions these expectant parents can make that will help them lessen the anxieties they are describing.

IF LAURA AND HUNTER WERE BOTH PREPARING FOR THE BABY, WHY WERE THEY HAVING SUCH PROBLEMS?

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

What do Laura and Hunter do to get ready for the baby?

- In what way is Laura getting ready?
- In what way is Hunter getting ready?
- Is Laura more concerned about the baby and preparations than Hunter? Are women usually more involved than men?
- What kind of preparation are they focusing on? What kind of preparation are they overlooking?

Comments: Laura and Hunter prepare for the baby's birth in different ways. Both focus on physical rather than psychological preparation. Laura gets the nursery ready and learns about childbirth. Hunter tries to earn and save money.

What are the different ways Hunter and Laura try to resolve their feelings?

- How does Hunter cope with his feelings? What needs do work and Bill fulfill? In what ways do they add to his problem?
- What finally brings Hunter to share his feelings with Laura?
- What are Laura's ways of coping with her feelings? How do her ways differ from Hunter's? Why doesn't it work when she tries to share her feelings?
- What's different about the way Hunter and Laura talk to each other at the end of the drama and the ways they'd talked before?
- To what do Hunter and Laura agree at the end of the program? What are some of the decisions they still need to make?

Comments: Laura and Hunter's coping methods, such as talking with friends, getting involved in work and fixing up the nursery, provide temporary relief and help for both parents. These methods don't, however, resolve the central problem — the lack of communication and sense of working together. If Laura and Hunter had already established this feeling of closeness and teamwork, some of their earlier coping strategies might have helped rather than added to the problem.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
ACT IT OUT

With your classmates, put yourselves in the place of parents who are expecting a baby. Pair off into couples. Choose one of the following scenes to role play in front of the entire group.

Try to express the feelings of the expectant parents in a believable manner. Think about how you can best convey your feelings to your partner.

The job of the audience is to watch and evaluate each performance.

1. Tom and Mia are expecting a baby in 4 months. Tom is secretly a bit nervous but outwardly appears nonchalant about the whole situation. Mia has begun to read books on childbirth and child development. She's anxious for Tom to start reading so they can talk about it together.

   But Tom says he doesn't see what all the fuss is about. He doesn't feel any need to read about the pregnancy. After all, he's not pregnant. And why should he go through all these elaborate preparations when the baby is 4 months away?

2. Casey wants Marshall to go with her to Doctor Kelset's office to get to know the doctor and become familiar with hospital procedures when the baby is born.

   Marshall doesn't see why it's important for him to go to the doctor's.

3. The question is: Who's going to help out when Jean and the baby come home from the hospital? For a number of reasons, Jean wants her mother to come and stay with them at this time.

   Boris, on the other hand, doesn't want anyone to stay and help out. He thinks that he and Jean should share the responsibilities.

4. Shawn and Laura are having an argument. Laura wants Shawn to take his turn getting up with the baby when it cries during the night. Laura has thought of many reasons to support her argument and repeats them all to Shawn.

   Shawn, however, thinks that night duty should belong to Laura. After all, he works during the day and it'll be bad enough to have his sleep disturbed. He's the one who'll be supporting the entire family for a while, after all.

5. Tina has just found that they are expecting another child — their second. Ned is really excited. They've just called their parents and he wants to tell Sharon, their 3-year-old, the big news. Tina, however, disagrees. She wants to tell Sharon when the baby is born. How could she explain it to Sharon, anyway? She'll never understand.

activity #2
THE PAST . . .

In a short paper, describe your own preparation for parenthood. What kinds of experiences have you had with children? What attitudes toward children and parenthood have you learned from your own parents and other relatives?

activity #3
. . . AND THE FUTURE

Write a short essay on your feelings about parenthood:

- Do you want to have children?
  Why or why not?
- How many do you think you'll have?
- When do you plan to have them?
- What do you think parenthood will be like?

Ask students how their perceptions of the parent's role have changed over the years.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Invite a speaker from Planned Parenthood to your classroom to talk about family planning as an important part of preparation for parenthood.
2. Visit a childbirth preparation class and report on your visit to the rest of the class.
3. Visit a hospital maternity ward. Ask about childbirth and pre- and post-delivery procedures. See if it's possible to see a labor, delivery, or recovery room. Find out what arrangements they have for mothers and babies for the rest of their stay.
4. Babysit for one or more young children. Before babysitting, make a list of at least five things you need to know about caring for the children in order to be an effective babysitter. Ask the parent these questions before you babysit. Afterwards, share your babysitting experience, your questions and the parent's response with your classmates.

to discuss

1. What are some of the most important changes a couple will face when their first child is born? When their second child is born?
2. Set up a classroom debate on the topic "Fathers need to prepare for childbirth."
3. What are some ways a baby might be affected if parents are not emotionally prepared for the changes the baby will bring?

to research

1. Different methods of childbirth and the advantages of each.

Dr. Leboyer wants to make birth less of a shock for the newborn. He delivers the baby in a dimly lit and quiet room and massages and bathes the baby in warm water to make entry into the world as peaceful as possible.

Dr. Leboyer's methods have inspired others to re-examine childbirth procedures in hospitals. See his book, *Birth Without Violence,* Frederick Leboyer, New York: Knopf, 1975.

2. The advantages and disadvantages of breast feeding and bottle feeding. Why have opinions about feeding the baby changed over time?
3. The kinds of prenatal and delivery services available in your community. For instance, you might contact prenatal clinics, private obstetricians, midwife services and hospitals in your area. Find out the costs for such services as well as the range of services they provide.

Encourage students to make use of the Yellow Pages in the telephone book to find out about services for parents and newborns.

4. The cost of buying clothes and equipment for your new baby. Decide which things are absolutely necessary and investigate prices for each item. Add up the total cost. Then list alternative ways you might obtain the same items at less or no cost to yourself.
5. Parents' feelings once they bring the baby home. (*What Now? A Handbook for New Parents*, by Mary Lou Rozdilsky and Barbara Banet, is a good resource for this topic.)
6. The services available in your community to assist new parents after the birth of the baby.
7. Programs to help teenage mothers stay in school.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that will give you some more information on. . .

. . .*growth of the baby and change in the mother during pregnancy*

Prenatal Care. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Available in Spanish. (booklet)

. . .*parents' feelings during pregnancy*

Our Bodies Ourselves. The Boston Women's Health Book Collective, Inc. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971. (paperback)

Ourselves and Our Children. The Boston Women's Health Book Collective, Inc. New York: Simon and Schuster. 1978. (paperback)

Pregnancy: The Psychological Experience. Arthur and Libby Colman. New York: Bantam Books, 1971. (paperback)

Preparing for Parenthood. Lee Salk. New York: Bantam Books, 1974. (paperback)

So You're Going To Be A New Father? U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (paperback)

The Hassles of Being a Teenage Parent. U.S. Public Health Service. Order from: Family Planning Clearinghouse, Box 2225, Rockville, Maryland 20852

. . .options for childbirth

Birth: Facts and Legends. Caterine Milinaire. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1974. (paperback)

Childbirth Without Fear. Grantly Dick-Read. New York: Harper and Row, 1970.

Painless Childbirth. Fernard Lamaze. New York: Pocket Books, 1972. (paperback)

See also: *A Child's Journey.* Julius Segal and Herbert Yahraes. New York: McGraw-Hill 1978.

. . .*parents and baby after birth*

Father Power. Henry Biller and Dennis Meredith. New York: Anchor Books, 1974. (paperback)

What Now? A Handbook for New Parents. Mary Lou Rozdilsky and Barbara Banet. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972. (paperback)

Who Cares for the Baby? Beatrice Marden Glickman and Nesha Bass Springer. New York: Schocken Books, 1978.

CHILDREN AND TV: WATCH IT!

Who is Sylvia?

80

TO BEGIN...

TV has been called a lot of names — an "electronic mother," a "flickering blue parent," and an "electronic Pied Piper leading our children into a sea of undesirable and harmful influences," to name a few.

Whatever TV is, parents have to come to grips with it and decide what place to give it in their home, for TV is a major socializer of children.

You might begin by having your students debate the pros and cons of letting children watch TV. After they complete this unit, they can compare what they have learned with their original thoughts about TV.

FROM THE EDITORS

TV — a "vast wasteland?" Or a "window on the world?"

There are strong arguments for both sides. The evidence that TV is potentially harmful to children cannot be denied. Neither, on the other hand, can we ignore those who point out what children can learn from TV.

In this booklet you will explore both the harmful and helpful aspects of TV. You will learn how TV shapes children's ideas of what the world is like, as well as their attitudes toward themselves and others. You will see how, with proper use, children can benefit from even some of the things we don't like about TV. You will also find guidelines to help you decide how to use TV with your own children.

THE BIG IDEAS

- After parents, television is the most important teacher most children will have.
- TV can encourage passivity, hostility, stereotyping, and the desire for material things in children.
- TV can also teach new skills, encourage positive attitudes and behaviors, and provide children with experiences they have never had.
- Whether TV helps or hinders children's growth depends on how parents use television in the home.

Did You Know That. . .

In the U.S., more homes have television sets than bathtubs, indoor plumbing, telephones, toasters, or any other appliance?

In large cities water systems have had to be redesigned to handle heavy bathroom use during commercials?

Most young children spend more time watching TV than any other activity except sleeping?

Many preschoolers spend more time in front of the TV than it takes to get a college degree?

By the time he or she graduates from high school, the average child will have spent 11,000 hours in school and 15,000 watching TV?

> *Television ranks third behind sleep and work as a consumer of time. . . Time spent on television represents a reduction in time spent sleeping, at social gatherings away from home, radio listening, magazine and book reading, movie going, conversing, working on household tasks, and on other leisure. Unaffected, apparently, was time devoted to newspaper reading. . .*
>
> — George Comstock
> Professor of Communications, Syracuse University

TV or not TV: that is the question

You can learn a lot in 15,000 hours. That comes to about 2 years of sitting in front of the TV for about 24 hours a day.

And, indeed, children learn from TV all the time. A show [illegible] have to be "educational" to teach. Children learn from all [illegible]. The question is: for better or for worse?

Preschool children constitute the single heaviest TV viewing audience in the U.S.

There is a lot of evidence that TV can interfere with the growth of children's minds. Many people believe, though, that despite these bad reports, TV can still benefit children.

Let's imagine that a debate on the pros and cons of TV were broadcast on a national network. The debate might go something like this.

(VOICEOVER: "Charlie's Ankles" will not be seen tonight so that we can bring you the following special program.)

MODERATOR: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to what promises to be an exciting and historic occasion. Two experts on the effects of television on young children — Mr. Pessy Mystic and Ms. Seetha Lite — are here tonight to present opposing views on the proposition: "TV Benefits Children's Growth." Mr. Pessy Mystic will begin with the case against TV.

MR. MYSTIC: Thank you, Mr. Moderator, and good evening members of the viewing audience.

Like Frankenstein's creation, TV has gotten out of our control and now poses a threat to the physical, emotional, and mental health of our children. Tonight I will focus on four of the reasons why all parents should beware of this monster medium. The first reason is that:

TV is a passive experience.

Children learn by doing things. They need lots of physical, mental and social activity — like playing, reading, and talking with friends and family. They need real life. But TV requires no participation on the part of children. Instead, children just sit there — wasting time they could be using to be creative, develop motor skills, and work on other important tasks of growing up. In addition, I'm sure you're all aware that:

With this and each of the following examples, have students discuss whether they agree or disagree.

Some teachers say that children's play is less imaginative than in the past, and that children today have a low tolerance for the frustrations of learning. Children want everything to be quick and easy — like on TV.

There is too much violence on TV.

The average high school graduate has witnessed 18,000 murders on TV. Many of us are concerned about the long-term effects of all this violence. Studies have linked TV violence with aggressive behavior in children. We also know that too much violence can make children think human life isn't valuable. We worry that children are learning that violence works. Most of all, we are disturbed by stories such as this:

> *A 5-year-old boy in Cleveland, Ohio, asked his father to buy him some real bullets. When the father asked why, the boy explained that his toy bullets didn't kill people like on* Gunsmoke.

A large body of research on observational learning by preschool children. . . confirms children can and do learn aggressive behavior from what they see in a film or on a TV screen. . .
The vast majority of experimental studies. . . have found that obs[illegible]ed violence stimulated a[illegible]sive behavior rather t[illegible] the opposite.
Report of the National Commission on Causes and Prevention of Violence. Milton Eisenhower, Chairman, 1969.

Children learn by watching and imitating. When we show children behavior that is violent, we take the risk that children will model this behavior. Another problem we face is that:

TV stereotypes women and minorities.

At a time when women and minorities are fighting for equal opportunities, TV is not doing much to help. Men outnumber women on TV by about 3 to 1. When women do appear they are twice as likely as men to act foolish or incompetent. Women are almost always portrayed as housewives or entertainers.

Members of minority groups, too, are underrepresented on TV. When they do appear, they often reinforce unflattering stereotypes. This is particularly unfortunate because minority children tend to watch — and trust — TV even more than other children. Finally, I would like to point out that:

Television is too commercial.

It seems that someone is always trying to sell something on TV — especially to children. I am continually surprised — and horrified — by the way TV commercials take advantage of children. Program sponsors spend a small fortune making their commercials appealing so that children will persuade their parents to buy the products they advertise. They make salespeople out of children. What makes this even worse is that most of these commercials are for toys and sugared foods. Most parents don't want their children to develop a desire for these things. But the sponsors don't care. *They* don't care about the health of young children. *They* don't care . . .

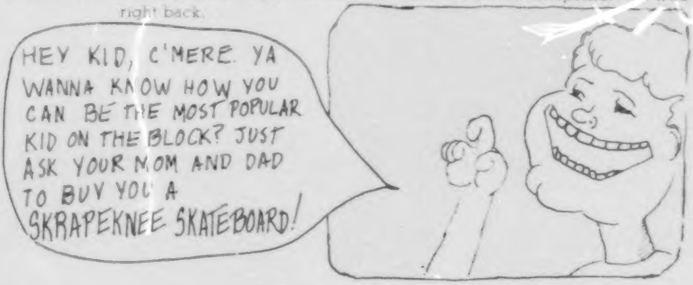
One authority reports that 25% of television's profit comes from the 7% of its programming directed to children. The U.S. has far more advertising for children than any other country in the world.

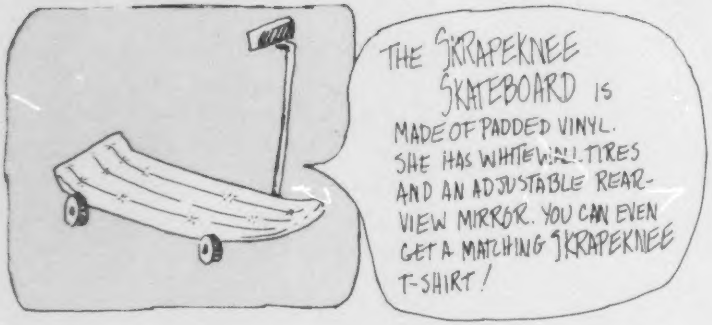
That's because commercial TV is designed to make money.

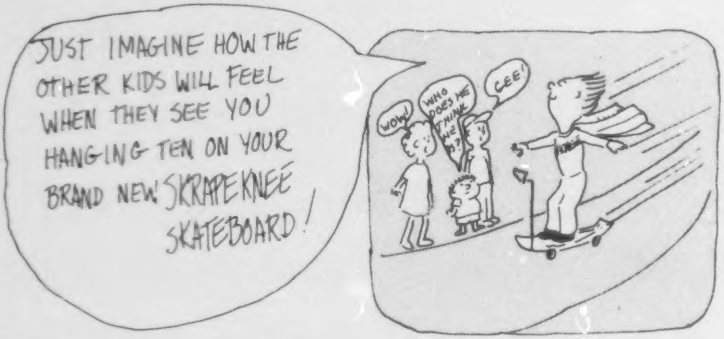
MODERATOR: Mr. Mystic, you have one minute to conclude your opening statement.

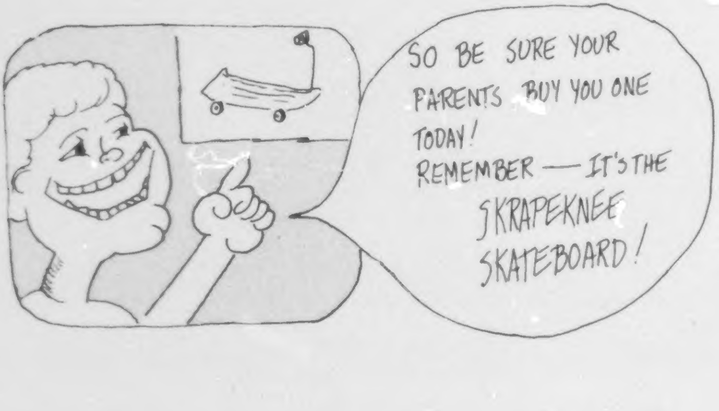
MR. MYSTIC: Ladies and gentlemen, I think it's perfectly clear that TV is turning our children into zombies, and their brains into mush. I'm sure no parent who knows the facts would want his or her child to meet up with such a monster.

MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Mystic. It's time now for a word from our sponsor. We'll be right back.


HEY KID, C'MERE. YA WANNA KNOW HOW YOU CAN BE THE MOST POPULAR KID ON THE BLOCK? JUST ASK YOUR MOM AND DAD TO BUY YOU A SKRAPEKNEE SKATEBOARD!


THE SKRAPEKNEE SKATEBOARD IS MADE OF PADDED VINYL. SHE HAS WHITEWALL TIRES AND AN ADJUSTABLE REAR-VIEW MIRROR. YOU CAN EVEN GET A MATCHING SKRAPEKNEE T-SHIRT!


JUST IMAGINE HOW THE OTHER KIDS WILL FEEL WHEN THEY SEE YOU HANGING TEN ON YOUR BRAND NEW SKRAPEKNEE SKATEBOARD!
WOW!
WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS?
GEE!


SO BE SURE YOUR PARENTS BUY YOU ONE TODAY! REMEMBER — IT'S THE SKRAPEKNEE SKATEBOARD!

MODERATOR: We are ready now for Ms. Lite's opening statement.

MS. LITE: Thank you. My opponent has outlined some of the basic problems with TV. I don't deny any of them. But why throw up our arms in despair? Why waste time lamenting the harm that TV can do? TV is here to stay. Let's turn it to our advantage. Let's look at some of the benefits of TV. For example:

TV can introduce children to new experiences.

TV can broaden children's knowledge and interests. It can show them things they've never seen, places they've never been, things they've never done, and people they've never met. Children who live in the city can learn how a snake sheds its skin, and what it's like to live on a farm. Children from rural areas can learn about the many different kinds of people who live in cities — and in other countries, too. It's also been shown that:

TV can teach children new skills.

Children can — and have — learned skills such as reading, counting, spelling and problem-solving through TV. They learn these skills through educational programs designed to teach these skills, as well as through regular programming. Children can, for example, match wits with the star of their favorite detective show. They see all sorts of letters and numbers on the TV screen and hear many new words. In addition:

Studies show that children learn more when parents or older siblings view educational programs with them and talk about what is shown.

TV can teach children healthy attitudes toward themselves and others.

Many people believe that *Roots* may have done more to increase our understanding of race relations in America than any other event since the Civil Rights Movement of the 60's. This is but one example of how TV can help build respect for other people. There are many other programs dealing with important feelings and situations such as love, anger, birth, death and divorce. Through such programs, children develop a better understanding of themselves and others. It's also a fact that:

TV can teach children behaviors all parents want their children to learn.

There are many programs — on both public and commercial TV — that offer examples of sharing, cooperation, courage and self-control. Children imitate these behaviors as well as the violent ones my opponent mentioned. For example, Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, a well-known pediatrician, tells this story:

> *A 6-year-old who had always been afraid of the doctor came in for a check-up. As Dr. Brazelton applied the stethescope to the boy's chest, the boy said: "Just like Mister Rogers." When the doctor looked in the boy's ears, the boy grimaced but just said, "Just like Mister Rogers." And just before the doctor gave him a shot, the boy said: "Mister Rogers said it was okay for kids my age to cry."*

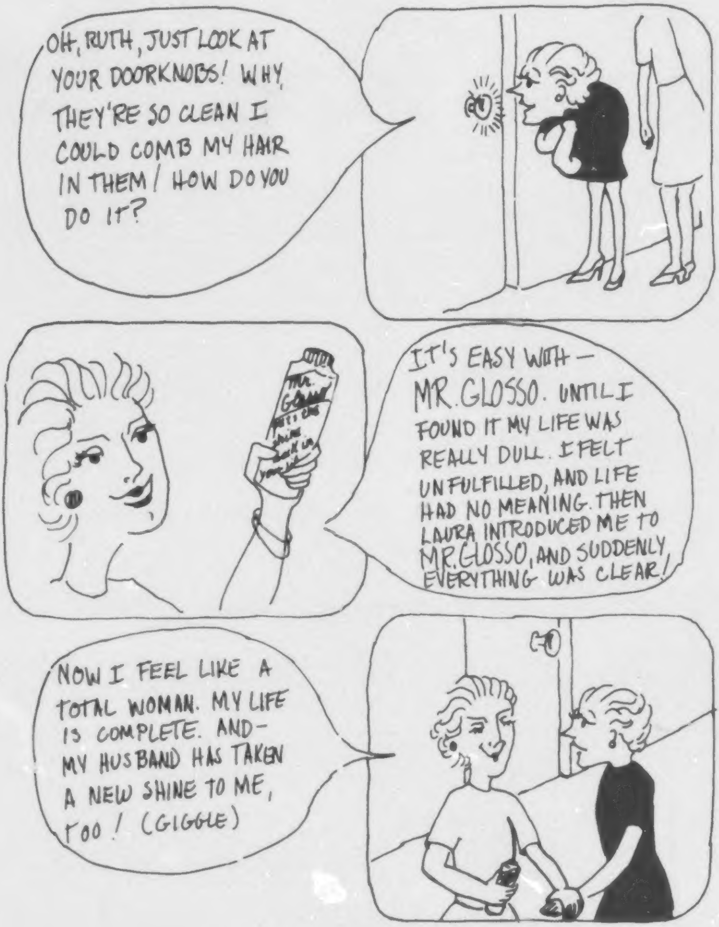
See unit on *Social Skills*.

I think it's perfectly clear that

MODERATOR: One more minute.

MS. LITE: In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, let me remind you again that TV is going to be around for a long time. We serve ourselves and our children best if we learn to deal with its faults, and build on its strengths. TV may be a monster, but it's one that can be tamed.

MODERATOR: Mr. Mystic and Ms. Lite will rebut each other's arguments right after this message from our sponsor.


OH, RUTH, JUST LOOK AT YOUR DOORKNOBS! WHY, THEY'RE SO CLEAN I COULD COMB MY HAIR IN THEM! HOW DO YOU DO IT?
IT'S EASY WITH — MR. GLOSSO. UNTIL I FOUND IT MY LIFE WAS REALLY DULL. I FELT UNFULFILLED, AND LIFE HAD NO MEANING. THEN LAURA INTRODUCED ME TO MR. GLOSSO, AND SUDDENLY EVERYTHING WAS CLEAR!
NOW I FEEL LIKE A TOTAL WOMAN. MY LIFE IS COMPLETE. AND— MY HUSBAND HAS TAKEN A NEW SHINE TO ME, TOO! (GIGGLE)

MODERATOR: Well, I think we're ready now for Mr. Mystic's rebuttal.

MR. MYSTIC: My opponent has pointed to a few oases in the vast wasteland of television. But she has very cleverly managed to avoid the rest of the desert. She appears to believe that because some TV programs offer useful information, it doesn't matter that the rest present a fantasy world that has nothing to do with reality.

Doesn't she know that young children believe what they see on TV — even when it differs from their own experience and values? Adults can balance what they see against their life experiences. They are aware of the tricks used in advertising. But children cannot protect themselves from these appeals. To leave them alone in this arid wasteland is nothing short of desertion.

> Furthermore, young children cannot differentiate between the essential and non-essential information in a TV story or commercial. "Recent research findings indicate that even at second-grade and third-grade levels, children often pay attention to and remember fewer or different aspects of programs than adults would expect. The result is often an incomplete or distorted view of the people or events they see and learn about on television."
>
> — W. Andrew Collins

MS. LITE: Apparently geography is not one of my opponent's strong points. He calls TV a desert. I see it as a jungle — one that like any jungle has a lot of underbrush to be cleared away, but one that is also full of new and exciting things.

It also seems that my opponent is a bit hard of hearing. I never implied that parents should leave children alone to deal with what they see on TV. On the contrary, it is imperative that parents become involved in their children's viewing. If they do, almost any show can be turned into a learning experience.

For example, if a commercial such as the one for Skrapeknee Skateboards came on the TV screen, I might say to my daughter:

Remember when we went to buy that helicopter you saw on TV? Remember how it didn't look nearly so big or nice in the store?

With a commercial such as the one for Glosso, I might ask:

Do you know any mothers who act like that? Why do you suppose they made those women look so silly?

A few such comments now and then help children develop critical viewing skills. I have a handout here that summarizes some other ways parents can add a healthy dimension to TV viewing in their home.

Could I get a camera on this, please?

CHANNELING CHILDREN'S VIEWING

Find out what children are watching.

For 1 week, keep a record of how many hours children watch TV and what they watch.

Look out for sexual and racial stereotypes, excessive violence, and other behaviors children might imitate.

Watch how children react to what's on the screen: Are they excited? Disturbed? Confused?

Decide which kinds of programs they should watch, and how often.

Talk to children about what they watch.

Watch programs with children whenever possible.

If you can't join them, let them know you're there to talk about a program or answer questions.

Ask children what they think about different shows, and encourage them to ask questions.

Don't be afraid to express your own likes and dislikes: "I don't like to see people treated like that."

Talk about: issues that come up on programs; the difference between make-believe and real life; TV characters and how they are like or unlike people you know; how violence can hurt people; how people feel.

As children get older, help them become more aware of commercial appeals, stereotypes and program messages.

Plan children's TV diet.

On a daily or weekly basis, go over the *TV Guide* or a local program listing with children and select programs for viewing.

If children want to watch a show you think is inappropriate, explain what you don't like about it.

Be gentle but firm in enforcing limits.

Encourage children to watch a wide range of programs.

Provide children with lots of other activities besides watching TV.

Follow up TV viewing with active experiences.

Encourage children to draw or act out what they saw.

Have them make up a story about one of their favorite programs. Type it up and let them illustrate it.

Help them write letters — to stars, stations, and sponsors — asking questions and expressing opinions.

Play games to increase children's understanding and skills. For example: look for a new word each day; describe a TV character and have children guess who it is; imagine what certain characters would do if they appeared on other programs.

Follow up new information and interests with books and field trips.

"To some, and possibly to a great degree, the socializing prowess of television depends on the lack of intervention by non-vicarious agents, such as teachers and parents."
— George Comstock

It has been found that 78% of parents use TV as a babysitter.

In other words, if parents and teachers explain and present other ideas, the power of TV as a model to imitate is sharply reduced.

MS. LITE: Parents can also make phone calls and write letters about the things they don't like about TV. Broadcasters *have* changed or dropped programs when the resonse has been loud enough. Or, parents can become involved in groups that are trying to do something about children's programming. There is strength in numbers.

The American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Academy of Child Psychiatry and the American Orthopsychiatric Association are all on record calling for corrective action on TV programming for children.

MODERATOR: It's time now for each opponent to make a closing statement. Mr. Mystic?

MR. MYSTIC: Ladies and gentlemen, I think the evidence is clear: TV is a waste of time. It can cripple creativity and weaken reading skills. It can lead to aggressive behavior and encourage overconsumption. There is only one solution:

Let's pull the plug!

MS. LITE: Members of the viewing audience, the facts presented here tonight have demonstrated that TV does not have to be a passive experience. It can stretch children's imagination, increase their vocabulary, and enrich play. The choice is up to the parents:

Let's take control!

MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Mystic and Ms. Lite. And now, ladies and gentlemen, the choice really is up to you. You have heard both sides of the argument. Where do you stand? Send your votes to:

Take a vote among the entire class.

AMS - TV
Box 701
Silver City, New York

We'll be waiting to hear from you. Thank you for watching, and good night.

FILM REVIEW SECTION

Who Is Sylvia?

Characters:

- Joe Sanchez — *a young father*
- Maggie — *his wife*
- Christina — *their 4-year-old daughter*
- Tio Daniel — *Maggie's uncle*
- Cindy — *Maggie's sister*
- Riche Morales — *a young boy*
- Senora Morales — *Riche's mother*
- Ed — *Joe's partner*

Joe Sanchez has suddenly become aware that TV can be a dangerous influence on children. A young boy whom he drove home jumped off the roof in imitation of Omega Man, a TV "supercop." Joe feels partially responsible, and forbids any TV viewing in the Sanchez home while 4-year-old Christina is awake.

Joe's wife, Maggie, and the rest of the family find this ultimatum difficult, but they cooperate. Then one day Uncle Tio takes Christina to the community center. There they watch a TV soap opera about a girl named Sylvia who almost gets hurt by a loaded gun.

Shortly after, Joe leaves his own gun on the table. Christina climbs up to guard the gun. At first Joe misinterprets her action. Maggie helps him see that Christina was only applying a valuable lesson she learned from TV.

CAN TV REALLY TEACH BOTH GOOD AND BAD?

Documentary:

Dr. Edward Palmer, Director of Research for the Children's Television Workshop, presents some of the studies that he has conducted on the influence of television on young children. He stresses the important role that parents need to play in interacting with their children as they view television.

Have the students discuss what they think the children shown in the documentary are learning from TV.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

What messages do the children in this program pick up from watching television?

- Do children pick up the same messages that adults do?
- Do children believe these messages?
- Do children act on what they learn from television viewing?

Comments: Both Riche and Christina are ready learners of TV's messages. Riche believes that Omega Man does indeed have super powers. Christina similarly gives credence to Sylvia's words and actions.

The messages that both of these children learned from TV were affected, to some degree, by adult intercession. Riche believed in Omega Man, but his faith was intensified following his encounter with Joe. Christina, too, picked up messages with regard to Sylvia while watching television. Her messages, however, were interpreted by Tio in terms of his perceptions.

Using these filtered messages, though, both children believed in what TV said so strongly that they followed up on what they had learned: Riche by trying to fly and Christina by enacting Sylvia-related lessons.

Was it practical for Joe to try to "pull the plug" and keep Christina from watching television?

- Was it inconsistent for the adults to want to watch TV and yet keep Christina from viewing?
- What were Joe's motives in forbidding Christina to watch TV? Was it fear of TV's harmful effects? Or was it to assuage Joe's own guilt?

Comments: In the Sanchez family, it does not seem likely that Joe's plan would have worked on a long-term basis. For one thing, by telling Christina she cannot watch TV, yet watching it themselves, they are turning television into the "forbidden fruit." In addition, they are leaving Christina with the belief that television is a reward that comes with age. Her desire to watch would, therefore, be magnified.

This is not to say that Joe's plan couldn't have been implemented or that it might not be successful in some homes. In the Sanchez household, however, TV appears to be ingrained in everyone's life.

Rather than barring television, it would be more practical for the Sanchez family to accept TV watching as a fact of life on which positive learnings can be built.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
WHERE DO YOU STAND?

Write a letter to the manager of the TV station that broadcast the Mystic-Lite debate. Tell him or her which side you agree with and why. Explain how you plan to use TV when you have children of your own.

activity #2
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

If you were a parent, what would you say or do in each of the following situations?

You walk into the living room where your son is watching TV and notice a look of terror on his face. You look to see what's on the screen:

> *A giant rat has invaded the quiet and peaceful town of Friendship Heights. The beast is knocking down buildings, wiping cars off highways, and trampling everyone and everything in its way. Smacking its lips, it is heading toward a 2-year-old girl. It is getting closer and closer.*

You live in a rural area of New England and your children have not met many people from different backgrounds. You are watching TV with your family when an old Western comes on the screen:

> *It takes place in a small town in Texas where many Mexicans live. All the Mexicans in the movie seem to spend most of their time taking siestas and avoiding work. They wear enormous sombreros and speak a very comical form of broken English.*

You are watching the Saturday morning cartoons with your 4-year-old son. It's a good thing, too, because here's what happens on Roadhog:

> *The Mad Demon is out to kill Roadhog. Within a space of 3 minutes, the Demon blows Roadhog's head off with a cannon, drops a boulder on top of him, pushes him off a cliff, blows him up with a keg of dynamite, and runs over him with a truck.*

activity #3
CHECK IT OUT

Find out for yourself what message TV has for children. Spend one Saturday morning watching children's programs, and one weekday evening watching the regular programs that children watch. Record your observations in the charts below.

Saturday Morning Children's Programming

Program	Number of incidents of violence	Number of commercials	Products advertised	Stereotypes	What else you would discuss with children	Whether you would recommend for children	
						Yes	No

Weekday Evening Adult Programming

Program	Number of incidents of violence	Number of commercials	Products advertised	Stereotypes	What else you would discuss with children	Whether you would recommend for children	
						Yes	No

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Watch TV with a young child. Note how he or she reacts to what's on the screen:

    When is he or she bored, captivated, scared, puzzled or happy?
    What programs or commercials does he or she like best? Can you guess why?
    What things do you talk about with the child? How does the child react?

   Write up your observations.
2. Interview at least 3 parents about their children's viewing habits:

    As a rule, how many hours a day do their children watch TV?
    What are their children's favorite shows? Why?
    Do they regulate their children's viewing? How?
    Have their children ever been scared or confused by what they see on TV?
    Have their children ever asked them to buy something that was advertised on TV?
    Do their children usually watch TV alone, with them, with friends, or with siblings?

   Share your findings with your classmates.
3. Write to one or more of the following groups to find out how they are trying to bring about changes in children's television:
   a) Action for Children's Television (ACT)
   (or a similar group in your community, if one exists).

ACT is probably the most outspoken and most successful critic of TV commercials for children. ACT was largely responsible for eliminating the sponsorship of vitamins on TV.

   b) The American Medical Association (AMA)
   c) The Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
4. With your classmates, talk about the different kinds of tactics used in commercials to attract viewers. Then, write and act out your own commercials using these techniques.
5. Visit a television studio to find out how programs are planned and produced.

to discuss

1. Discuss your own TV viewing habits with your classmates:

    Do you watch a lot of TV?
    Do you think you watch too much?
    Would you want your children to watch the programs you watch?
    Why do you watch TV? For relaxation? Education? Because you have nothing better to do?
    How does TV affect the way you plan and schedule your life?

2. Set up a classroom debate on the following subject:

    Because children need special protection, children's television programming should be regulated by the Federal government.

3. What kinds of stereotypes have you seen on TV? Have they changed at all over the years? Which ones bother you most?
4. When viewers complain about the amount of sex and violence on TV, network officials sometimes say that they are just giving people what they want. Do you agree or disagree?

to research

1. Studies on the relationship between violence on TV and aggressive behavior in children.

    In what different ways have these studies been interpreted?
    How do you interpret them?

   (See *The Early Window, Effects of Television on Children and Youth,* by Robert M. Liebert *et al.*)

2. Children's programming in other countries:

    Who controls it?
    What kinds of programs are offered?
    At what times are they offered?

3. How TV stations are required to serve the public. What happens if they don't follow these regulations?
4. The role that the following organizations play in regulating TV programming:

    The Federal Communications Commission
    The Federal Trade Commission
    The National Association of Broadcasters.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . .understanding and dealing with television

Guide to Citizen Action in Radio and Television. Marsha O'Bannon Prowitt. New York: Office of Communication, United Church of Christ, 1971. (paperback)

How to Talk Back to Your Television Set. Nicholas Johnson. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970. (paperback)

The Incredible Television Machine. Lee Polk and Eda Leshan. New York: Macmillan, 1977.

. . .using television with children

The Family Guide to Children's Television. Evelyn Kaye. New York: Pantheon Books, 1974. (paperback)

New Season. The Positive Use of Commercial TV With Children. Rosemary Lee Potter. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1976. (paperback)

TV: The Family School. Edward Morris and Freida Gregory. Atlanta, Georgia: Avator Press, 1976. (paperback)

. . .special topics related to television

Children and Television. Lessons from Sesame Street. Gerald S. Lesser. New York: Vintage, 1974. (paperback)

Children's TV. The Economics of Exploitation. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963. (paperback)

The Early Window. Effects of Television on Children and Youth. Robert M. Liebert, John M. Neale, and Emily S. Davidson. New York: Pergamon Press, 1973. (paperback)

DEALING WITH DEATH: THE TIME IS NOW

And We Were Sad, Remember?

TO BEGIN...

Death is a subject that elicits strong emotions in all of us. It is a subject of great concern to us. How strange, then, that we so persistently avoid this subject.

An interesting way to lead into this unit might be to have students speculate as to why death has become such a taboo subject in our country. Does it have any connection with the fact that we are such a youth-oriented society? Do we hide death like we hide our wrinkles and our age?

FROM THE EDITORS

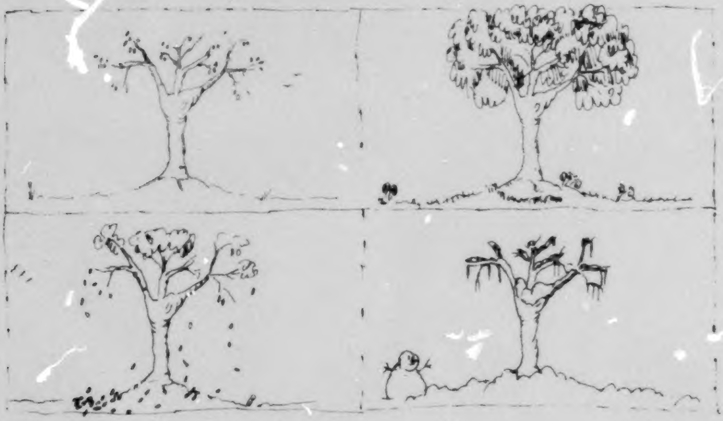
Death is one of the few things in life we can count on. Sooner or later we will die. It's just a matter of time.

But even though death cannot be escaped, our society tries to deny — even defy — this final phase of living. Until recently it has been almost un-American to talk about death — especially with children.

In this booklet you will learn how our attempts to conceal death from children are not only ineffective, but harmful to children. You will learn why children need to know about death, how parents can introduce this subject at an early age, and how parents can help children deal with death when it happens.

THE BIG IDEAS

- Because it is part of life, parents need to help children understand and accept death.
- Children can begin to understand and talk about death at an early age.
- Shielding children from death tends to confuse them and deprive them of their right to mourn.
- Introducing children to the idea of death early in life, and answering their questions honestly, prepares children to deal with death when it happens.



To everything there is a season
and a time to every purpose —
A time to be born, a time to die;
A time to weep and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance.

— Ecclesiastes 3:1,2,4.

DEATH: A Part of Life

Death is a fact of life.

Death is as natural a human experience as birth. The fact that we are alive today means that one day we will die. This is part of the unending cycle of life.

Yes, death is sure to come. But despite its inevitability, death has become a taboo subject in our culture. So many people regard it as an issue to be avoided — especially with young children. We don't even like to use the word "dead." Instead, we say: he "passed on" or "departed" or "expired" or "went away."

How did this reluctance come about?

AN UNSPOKEN WORD

Until the early part of this century, death was a natural part of family life in this country. Families were larger, and people often died at younger ages than they do today. Death, like birth, usually happened in the home, in the presence of the whole family. Few children grew up without seeing death take place.

> *The generations need each other. When death was a family affair, it brought the generations together. Now, it seems death keeps the generations apart.*
>
> — Lewis Mumford

Today, however, we have found ways to cure many diseases and to lengthen life. When death does take place, it is usually in the hospital, far away from the eyes of children. The body is then taken to a funeral parlor to be prepared for burial:

The process of death has become isolated from the life of the family.

> All but about ⅓ of us will die in hospitals or old age homes.

And as we have come to see less of death, so have we begun to talk less about it. Maybe we think that by avoiding the subject, death will go away.

It won't, of course.

Many parents are particularly hesitant to discuss death with young children. Perhaps they think that children are not capable of understanding and talking about death. Or, they may want to shield their children from this painful experience for as long as possible. They may think they can avoid death by not mentioning the subject, or ignoring children's questions, or giving children roundabout answers.

They can't, of course.

> One study showed that most parents cannot even recall how they told their children about the death of someone they loved.

A REALITY THAT CAN'T BE HIDDEN

Children are aware of death from an early age:

> The reality of death cannot be hidden, for death is always around us.

One day grandpa may not return from the hospital. Or a favorite pet may be hit by a car. A funeral procession may pass by. Or a well-known public figure may be assassinated. And, for those children who watch the television news, people are killed every day in "living" color.

Young children are quite capable of understanding and talking about death. Not only are they able, but:

> Children are willing and even eager to talk about death.

They are curious about what happens around them. They know when something is wrong. They notice whispered phone calls, hushed conversations, tears, and strained faces. They notice — and they want to understand what it all means.

A study by psychologist Maria Nagy demonstrated that three questions about death recur in children's minds: 1) "What is death?" 2) "What makes people die?" and 3) "What happens to people when they die?"

A Mixed Message

American novelist James Agee won a Pulitzer Prize for his portrayal of a young boy's first encounter with death in *A Death in the Family*. Here is how the boy, Rufus, reacted when his mother first told him and his sister of their father's death in an automobile accident:

> . . . "Neither of you will quite understand for a while," she said. "It's — very hard to understand. But you will," she said (I do, he said to himself; he's dead. That's what) . . . "When you want to know more — *about* it" (and her eyes became still more vibrant) "just, just ask me and I'll tell you because you ought to know." *How did he get hurt*, Rufus wanted to ask, but he knew by her eyes that she did not mean at all what she said, not now anyway, not this minute, he must not ask; and now he did not want to ask because he too was afraid . . .

HOW MUCH DID RUFUS' MOTHER THINK HE WAS ABLE TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT DEATH?

HOW DID HIS MOTHER'S WORDS AND BEHAVIOR AFFECT RUFUS?

A NEED AND A RIGHT

Parents who ignore children's questions about death, or give them false or incomplete information, are not helping children in their search for meaning. Such tactics only confuse children. They leave children all alone to find their own explanations for what has happened:

> Three-year-old Cindy's uncle has died. She sees her mother crying and the rest of the family talking in whispers. She asks her mother what's wrong. "Nothing," says her mother. Cindy thinks she must have done something wrong. She begins to feel guilty, and goes to her room to try to figure out what she did to upset everyone.

By trying to protect their children, parents can instead make death a very frightening subject:

> Five-year-old Randy's grandmother has died. Because Randy was so close to his grandmother, Randy's parents tell him that grandma has just gone to sleep and won't ever wake up again. Starting that night, Randy dawdles about going to bed. He lies terrified in his bed each night, trying very hard not to fall asleep. He is worried that he, too, might never wake up again.

Children have always been scared by secrecy and mystery.

Children who are shielded from death are deprived of their right to mourn. Like love, hate, and joy, sorrow is a natural and important human emotion.

And children are not strangers to unhappy feelings. They know how it feels to be mad, sad, and afraid.

Like other emotions, sorrow needs to be expressed. This is true for children as well as for adults. Mourning the death of a relative or friend or pet is an expression of love. It provides children with a chance to grow, to overcome pain, and to come to terms with their loss.

These are important experiences that no parent would want to deny children.

DEATH: Bringing It Out in the Open

Death is not an easy thing to accept. Nothing parents can say or do will ever make death painless for children. By offering truth and support, though, parents can make it easier for children to deal with death.

Nor is it possible to say exactly what parents should tell children about death. This will depend on many things, including their own feelings about death, their religious beliefs, and the developmental level of their children. Here, though, are a few general guidelines that can be useful in talking to children about death:

INTRODUCE CHILDREN TO THE IDEA OF DEATH EARLY IN LIFE.

It is better to start discussing death with children when they are young than to wait until they are actually confronted with death. In this way, children can begin to deal with the facts of death without the complication of strong emotions, such as grief. Then, when a death actually occurs, they will be better prepared to cope with it.

Parents can use many ordinary events to introduce children to the concept of death. The death of a plant can help to get across the idea of the rhythm of life and the notion that — unlike a broken toy — some things cannot be fixed or changed. The death of a pet can provide a good opportunity for children to experience feelings of grief. When this happens, parents should not rush out and buy children a new pet. By waiting a while, they let children learn and grow from one of their first encounters with the sorrow of losing something dear to them.

BE HONEST AND STRAIGHTFORWARD IN YOUR EXPLANATIONS OF DEATH.

As we've already learned, telling half-truths or untruths about death is likely to make children confused and anxious. Children need simple, direct and honest information about death.

This does not mean that parents should overwhelm children with details about death. Giving a child too much information can be as confusing as too little. If a 3-year-old child asks what "dead" means, parents need not give a long scientific explanation. A simple, factual reply will do: "Death is when a person's body stops breathing and can never move again." Parents help most when they talk to children honestly, but at their level.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO EXPRESS THEIR FEELINGS ABOUT DEATH

When children experience the death of someone they love, they react in many different ways, just like adults. They may deny what has happened, or protest its unfairness. They may be angry at the dead person for leaving them, or blame themselves for doing something that made the person die. They may cry, despair, or withdraw. They may want to stage an elaborate funeral for a dead pet, or play "death" or "funeral" with their friends. They may even have no response at all.

The child's lack of response may trouble adults who want to be sure that the finality of death is somehow communicated. It really can't be understood, however, until the child is old enough to have a clear sense of present and future time.

Playing a funeral may seem to be a strange game for little children, but it is a healthy way for a child to work out what he has seen or imagined.

All these reactions are normal ways of coping with pain and should be respected. Parents should encourage children to express their emotions — through talking, playing, or whatever activity serves the individual child's needs. Parents also help children work through their feelings of grief when they let children know that they, too, are sad and troubled: "I'm unhappy that your cousin Stevie died, too. I loved him, and I miss him very much."

When a Parent Dies . . .

Parents deal best with this difficult situation when they are open with their own feelings, find outlets for their emotions, and seek the comfort and help of friends. It is important that they let children participate in the family's observance of death. They should not be surprised if their children do not have the same strong feelings they have, for often young children are not able to understand the finality of death. If, however, a child seems overwhelmed by the loss, the parent may want to seek professional advice. One out of 20 children faces the death of a parent during childhood. The loss of a parent is especially hard on children. Their world will never be as secure again. They may react with guilt (that they did something to cause the death) or fear (that the other parent will leave them, too).

Helping a child deal with the death of a parent is very hard for the remaining parent, too. He or she may be overwhelmed by painful feelings. The parent has to work through these feelings, and at the same time give the child emotional support and reassurance that life goes on.

REMEMBER THAT YOUNG CHILDREN'S INITIAL UNDERSTANDING OF DEATH IS NOT COMPLETE

Very young children are not able to understand the finality of death. They don't realize that death means a complete and permanent end to life. Instead, they tend to view death as merely a separation, or a state of being less alive:

> *After President Kennedy had been killed and buried, his 3-year-old son John came back to the White House for a visit. When he saw his father's secretary, he looked up at her and asked: "When is my daddy coming back?"*

Even though young children's understanding of death is incomplete, parents should still talk to them about death. Children will take in what information they can, and gradually their understanding of death will deepen.

Death is hard, but fortunately, grief does not last forever. Children, like adults, gradually adapt and learn to live without those they once loved.

Children, too, can learn to live with death.

A POET'S INSPIRATION

We may be unwilling to talk about death in everyday life. But throughout the centuries men and women have explored death's meaning in great works of art. Look, for example, at how death has inspired poets. They have seen death as

. . . a solemn end that awaits us all:
Bear in mind
That death is a drum
Beating for ever
Till the last worms come
To answer its call . . .
— Langston Hughes
Drum

. . . a cold but genteel driver coming to take a lady out for a drive:
Because I could not stop for death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And immortality . . .
— Emily Dickinson
The Chariot

. . . a comfort to look forward to:
The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.
— Robert Frost
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

. . . one more phase in the never-ending cycle of life:
when god lets my body be
from each brave eye shall sprout a tree
fruit that dangles therefrom
the purpled world will dance upon . . .
— e. e. cummings
when god lets my body be

. . . a fate that should be resisted:
Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
— Dylan Thomas
Do not go gentle into that good night

Some other poems on death are:
Walt Whitman's "When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd"; Anna Bontemps' "Close Your Eyes"; and "I felt a funeral in my brain," by Emily Dickinson.

WHICH ONE OF THESE POEMS FITS MOST CLOSELY YOUR OWN ATTITUDE TOWARD DEATH?

CAN YOU RECALL ANY OTHER POEMS OR WORKS OF ART ABOUT DEATH? WHAT VIEW OF DEATH DO THEY EXPRESS?

Characters:

Amos Sandburg — *a young father*
Jeannie — *his wife*
Allison — *their 5-year-old daughter*
Christopher — *their 2½-year-old son*
Marian — *Amos' sister*
Catherine and Connie — *Marian's children*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

And We Were Sad, Remember?

Documentary:

Children explain what death means to them and what they think happens when a person dies. Two mothers tell how they helped their children deal with the deaths of their fathers.

Have the students discuss the differences between dealing with death before a parent has died and having to deal with it at the time a parent dies.

Amos Sandburg's mother has died. He and his wife Jeannie disagree about how much their two children, Allison and Christopher, should be involved in the final arrangements and funeral.

Amos and his sister think the children are too young to learn about death and go to the funeral. Jeannie, on the other hand, feels that Allison and Christopher should be allowed to participate to the extent that they want. She is honest with them in talking about death, and thinks they should be allowed to attend the funeral.

As Amos works through his own feelings about his mother's death, he observes how Allison and Christopher are reacting. Gradually, he realizes that not only are they able to cope with their grandmother's death, but that they have been doing a better job of it than he.

WHY WERE THE CHILDREN'S WAYS OF COPING WITH THEIR GRANDMOTHER'S DEATH MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THOSE OF AMOS?

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

How did Allison's ideas about death differ from her cousin Catherine's?

- Did Allison handle the idea of death well? Or was she obsessed with the subject?
- Why do you think that Catherine cried? Why couldn't she sleep?
- Would the girls have dealt with their grandmother's death even if their parents hadn't prepared them?
- Did the girls have an accurate concept of death? Or were they just parroting their mother's words?

Comments: Allison appears to be dealing very well with her grandmother's death. She has been included in the activities relating to the funeral and the packing up of Grandma's house. She readily talks about death with her parents, her cousins, and even play acts death. Rather than being obsessed with the subject, she is trying to understand what the finality of death means. Her cousin, on the other hand, shielded from the experience, is confused by the euphemisms she hears and the conflicting messages she is receiving from Allison. Her ability to deal with the subject does not approach Allison's level of understanding.

How did Jeannie, Amos, and Marian's views on dealing with death differ?

- Do you think that Amos and Marian initially had the same views because of the way they were raised?
- Why does Amos change his opinion?
- Was it easier for Jeannie to deal so well with death because it wasn't her parent who died? How do you think Jeannie would have reacted if it had been her mother who died?
- Do you think Jeannie went overboard in trying to involve her children in the observation of death

Comments: Jeannie believed in including children in the observation of death so that they would not feel excluded from what the adults were experiencing. She wanted her children to know that death is final and cannot be ameliorated. Amos and Marian, on the other hand, felt that children can best be served by protecting them from death's pain and sadness. Amos' observations, though, of what sheltering did to Catherine, and of how well Allison was handling death, led him to reconsider his position.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
A TIME TO TELL

Ordinary events — like the death of a plant or pet — can help parents teach children that life has a rhythm that cannot be changed. When children learn about death through such experiences at an early age, they are better able to cope with human death later on.

Here's how one mother helped her 3-year-old daughter understand the death of her dog.

"Mommy, Fido won't get up."

"Fido is dead, Jennifer. He died. He won't ever get up again."

"Dead?"

"Yes, that's right. Dead."

"What's dead?"

"Dead means that Fido has stopped breathing, and his heart has stopped beating. See how he's not moving? He'll never be able to move again."

"How come?"

"Because sooner or later everything that lives has to die."

"Will I die?"

"Yes, but not for a very long time."

"Will you die?"

"Yes, I'll die, too, but I take good care of myself, so that shouldn't be for many years."

"Will Daddy die?"

"Yes, everybody dies, but we expect Daddy will be around for quite a while yet."

"Oh. (Pause) Now make Fido better."

"I'm sorry, honey, I can't make Fido better. This isn't like when your scooter broke and I fixed it. Or like when you had a stomach ache and Daddy gave you medicine to make you feel better. This is different. When you're dead you don't get better again."

"Why?"

"Because that's the way things are. Remember how we planted seeds in the garden last spring?"

"Yes."

"And remember how they grew and became beautiful flowers?"

"Yes."

"And then after a while all the flowers fell off and never came back. Remember?"

"Yes."

"Well, that's what this is like. Fido used to be a little puppy. Then he grew up to be a big dog and had lots of fun with us for a while. Then he got old, and now he's dead."

"I don't like dead."

"I don't either. Nobody does. It makes us sad when someone we love dies. Sometimes it makes us feel a little better to talk about how we feel. Sometimes we cry. That's all right too. Do you feel sad?"

"Yes."

"I'm sad, too, honey. Come here on my lap and we'll be sad together."

This conversation gives the child a firm notion of the inevitable and irreversible aspects of death. Note how the parent answers all the child's questions honestly but does not burden her with more information than she requested.

What did Jennifer want to know about death?

How did her mother respond to her questions?

Was Jennifer able to understand her mother's answers?

Was she upset by her mother's explanation of death?

What else does this story tell you about explaining death to children?

activity #2
WHEN QUESTIONS COME . . .

In their search for knowledge, kids sometimes ask very difficult questions. Answering them can be a problem if you haven't thought things out beforehand.

Discuss with your classmates some different ways a parent might respond to the following questions about death:

"What does dead mean?"

"Why do people die?"

"How does it feel to die?"

"When is grandpa going to wake up?"

"Where do you go when you die?"

"Will I die, too? When?"

"Why didn't Uncle Eddie say "good-bye?"

"What's a cemetery?"

Another possible question is: "What happens to you in the ground?" Children often want to know what happens to the body after death.

activity #3
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

In each of the situations below, parents miss an opportunity to help a child understand and cope with death. In each case:

- explain what is wrong with the way the parent responded
- describe how the child may have been affected by this response
- suggest some better ways to handle the situation.

All summer Juanita has been helping her father tend their garden and harvest the vegetables. One morning she notices that the plants have all withered, and that there are no more vegetables. She asks her father what happened. He tells Juanita that they just need to get some new plants.

Bernard's parents have just found out that his grandmother, who lives with them, is dying of cancer. They decide to send his grandmother to a nursing home. They tell Bernard that she has gone on a long trip and won't be coming back.

Candy's pet goldfish dies one day while Candy is out with her father. Candy's mother quickly flushes the fish down the toilet, and rushes out to buy another fish. She hopes she can find one that looks just like the old one so that Candy will never know the difference.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Some schools are setting up death education programs. Find out if there is such a program in your area. Ask if you can observe the program in action. Or, talk to the teacher about why the program was established, how it works, and what the results are.

2. Look through some of the books on death written for young children. Choose one that you like, and read it to a young child. Talk to the child about the book when you're finished:

   What were the child's comments and questions?
   How much do you think the child understood about death?
   What were the child's feelings about the book and your discussion?

   (It would be wise to show the book to the child's parents and tell them what you plan to do.)
3. Find out if there is a place in your community that helps people deal with death — for example, a religious, family service, or mental health organization; Parents Without Partners; or Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America. Visit this organization and talk to someone about the kinds of difficulties children and adults have facing death, and what the organization does to help them.
4. Watch the Saturday morning cartoons and other children's programs to see how they portray death and dying. How do you think they might affect children's ideas about death?

See unit on *Children and TV.*

to discuss

1. Share with your classmates your experience(s) with the death of a relative, friend, or pet:

   Do you remember your first encounter with death?
   How did your parents explain it to you?
   How did you feel about it?
   What helped you most?
2. Do you ever think about death? Do you ever talk about it with your family or friends? Do you feel comfortable talking about death? Why or why not?
3. How do you think you would feel talking to a loved one who was dying? How could you help him or her prepare for death?
4. Should young children be allowed to see the body of a dead person? To attend a funeral? To go to a burial or memorial service?
5. Do we see so much simulated death on TV and in the movies that we are becoming immune to the subject?

For the most part, television does not provide children with a picture of dying that conveys elements of suffering, pain, or permanence. It is a picture of an event far removed from real life. See unit on *Children and TV.*

GRAB BAG

to research

1. How children's understanding of death increases as they grow older.
2. The movement in this country to set up hospices — centers for people who are dying that allow them to be surrounded by their family:

   How does dying in a hospice compare with dying in a hospital?
   Would hospices help bring death back into the family?
   Are they a good idea?

   (Look for articles in periodicals, and write to the Washington Hospice Society, 1511 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., or to a hospice society in your area.)

The hospice is a plan tried extensively in Great Britain and just beginning to develop in this country.

3. How people who have found out they were dying have come to terms with death, and the stages of grieving they have gone through. (See *On Death and Dying* by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and other books listed in the Book Section.)
4. What different religions teach about death. You might want to refer to the holy books of several different religions — for example, the *Holy Bible* (Christianity); *Koran* (Islam); *Talmud* (Judaism), *Bhagavad Gita* (Hinduism), and *Tibetan Book of the Dead* (Buddhism).
5. Mourning and burial customs in other cultures. For example, read about the Irish wake, Jewish shivah, Egyptian mummification, Italian burials, Native American death customs, and African funeral celebrations. In each case find out:

   what the culture's attitude toward death is
   what purpose(s) the mourning period or funeral ceremony serves
   how children are involved
   how these customs compare with your own.

6. How death has been portrayed in art. Select an art form in which you are interested (for example, music, painting, dance, film, photography, literature, or poetry) and find out how death has been described in this medium.
7. How children expressed their confrontation with death in Nazi concentration camps. (See the book *. . . I never saw another butterfly . . .* and Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl.*)

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that will give you more information on. . .

. . .children and death

Explaining Death to Children. Earl A. Grollman, ed. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967. (paperback)

Helping Your Child to Understand Death. Anna M. Wolf. New York: Child Study Press, 1973.

Talking About Death, A Dialogue Between Parent and Child. Earl A. Grollman. Boston: Beacon Press, 1970. (paperback)

. . .how dying people have coped with death

Brian's Song. WilliamBlinn. New York: Bantam, 1972. (paperback)

A film has been made of *Brian's Song* and is available through:

Learning Corporation of America
1350 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10019

Death Be Not Proud: A Memoir. John Gunther. New York: Harper and Row, 1949. (paperback)

Death, The Final Stage of Growth. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1975. (paperback)

On Death and Dying. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. New York: Macmillan, 1969. (paperback)

Sunshine. Norma Klein. New York: Avon, 1974. (paperback)

. . .how death has been portrayed in plays and novels

A Death in the Family. James Agee. New York: Avon, 1959. (paperback)

A Farewell to Arms. Ernest Hemingway. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929. (paperback)

The Good Earth. Pearl S. Buck. New York: Pocket Books, 1958. (paperback)

Red Badge of Courage. Stephen Crane. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960. (paperback)

ATTACHMENT AND INDEPENDENCE: YOU CAN'T HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER?

Love Me and Leave Me

TO BEGIN...

Attachment is a bond of love and trust.

Many parents worry that attachment brings dependency. "Attached," to them, means "tied" or "bound." They are afraid that if their baby becomes very attached to them, he or she will never become independent.

Research shows, however, that just the opposite is true. The stronger the bond between parent and baby, the more secure the baby becomes. Eventually the child becomes secure enough to let go and become independent.

You might begin this unit by having students do the True and False quiz in the BIG IDEAS section.

FROM THE EDITORS

The closer we are to someone the more easily we can separate and become independent from them. This thought sounds contradictory at first. But look at it another way. When a relationship becomes very strong, both people feel more secure. There is less worry and few demands to prove one's love. This security enables both people to separate without fear of being abandoned. It enables them to seek friendships with other people. This booklet focuses on the relationship or bond between parent and child. You'll learn how this bond forms and how it affects the development of the child. You'll read why children find it hard to separate from their parents and learn about ways they deal with their separation fears. Last, you'll learn about practical suggestions for making separations between parent and child easier.

THE BIG IDEAS

Babies form a special attachment or bond with the people who respond to their calls for food, comfort and attention in a consistent and loving way.

Most often babies form the first attachment to their mother, but not always. Babies become attached to anyone (father, babysitter, or day care worker) who cares for them lovingly and consistently.

A strong attachment to the parent gives the child the security to become independent and reach out to other people.

There are things parents can do to make inevitable separations less upsetting to their children.

True or False?

	T	F
A baby who is very attached to either or both parents is likely to become overly dependent on them.	☐	☐
Spoiling results when parents pick up a baby frequently.	☐	☐
By ignoring a baby's cries, parents are "building ing character" and getting their child ready for independence.	☐	☐
If parents respond to a baby's demands for food, comfort and attention, the baby becomes even more demanding.	☐	☐

Each of these items is FALSE. Students might make up a list of TRUE items for a post-test.

ATTACHMENT: Becoming Close

There was a time when many parents thought that picking babies up, cuddling and talking to them was a bad habit. They worried that such attention would spoil children forever. In 1928, John B. Watson, an American psychologist, warned parents:

> *Never hug or kiss them* [your children]. *never let them sit in your lap. If you must, kiss them once on the forehead when they say goodnight.*

Watson was convinced that good habits had to be started in infancy. He was the originator of the 10-2-6 feeding schedule that kept many mothers at an alarm clock waiting for the moment they could feed a very hungry baby.

He and others persuaded parents that children would never become considerate, independent adults if they were emotionally attached to their parents. Because of this, some people still have reservations about picking up a baby.

We know now, however, that it's essential for parents to be responsive to their babies. When parents respond quickly and consistently to cries during the first months, babies cry less often and for a shorter time later on.

In other words, once babies feel sure of their parents, they become less demanding.

In general, the more love parents give a baby, the more lovable that child will become — and the easier it will be for that child to make friends with other people. A strong attachment to the parent gives the child the security and confidence to let the parent go later on:

> The secure child becomes independent and reaches out to others.

Let's look at how this happens.

This is the link between attachment and independence.

A BOND IS BORN

The world is quite a shock to newborn babies.

Perhaps for the first time, they feel uncomfortable — wet, hungry and unprotected. For the first time, they have to wait — and they're miserable and anxious until the minute they are fed. They can't anticipate or see cause and effect; seeing their mother doesn't mean that it's almost time to eat. Newborn babies don't have any image of their parents in mind.

Not yet.

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But, without knowing it, babies begin to build a special bond with their parents. They cry. They startle. They stretch and wiggle. Their hands and feet speak as well as their faces. When babies act in these ways, parents want to respond.

Much research shows that fathers and mothers act in very different ways with babies. Michael W. Yogman's videotapes of babies interacting with both parents at Children's Hospital Medical Center in Boston show that mothers tend to echo the baby's sounds and imitate its movements. Fathers, on the other hand, act abruptly. They tend to touch the child suddenly or make faces, as if trying to excite the baby. It appears that the baby learns to respond to these styles very early in life.

Gradually, parents become able to "read" and respond to their babies' needs. They learn what those squirms and stretches mean. They learn to interpret different cries — the "I am hungry" from the "I want to be held" cry. They discover just how their babies like to be held, talked to and stroked.

These early communications later lead to language.

At the same time, babies learn to recognize their parents' special touch, smell and voices. They begin to associate their parents with feeling comfortable and secure. When they cry, they can rely on their parents to come and try to help. Parents may not be able to relieve all discomfort, but what counts is that they are there *trying*.

Gradually babies begin to love and trust their parents. This special bond is called **Attachment**.

Parents have to become attached to their babies, too. As the baby responds to their attention and care, they begin to feel successful as parents and necessary to the baby. Attachment to the baby is important for them to function adequately as caregivers in the long years of parenting ahead.

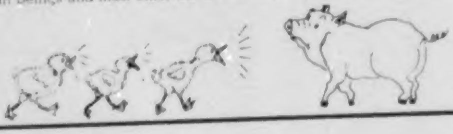
Studies have shown that there is a **Critical Period** during which babies must make that first important attachment to their parents or some other adult who gives them special care. If babies are to develop normally, they need to form this bond to the adult within a specified time.

One hospital gives the mother a picture of her newborn premature baby if the baby must be placed in an incubator before she sees it.

Did you Know that some kinds of baby geese follow the first object they see after hatching — whether it's a mother goose, moving tin can or human being? Within close to 13 hours, these goslings become completely attached to that moving object.

After this time, they shy away from all objects that are different from the one they first followed. This very specific kind of behavior is called **Imprinting**. A man named Konrad Lorenz has studied this phenomenon for years.

Human beings and most other animals do not imprint in such a rigid way.



Did you Know that all animals have critical periods for **bonding?** The bonding between a lamb and its mother is one example. Once the lamb is born, its mother licks it for nearly two hours before she allows it to nurse. If this licking ritual doesn't take place, the lamb fails to become attached to the mother. It can't recognize her, nor can the mother recognize her baby. Chances are, the lamb will die from starvation.

Students who live in rural areas may be able to tell how farmers consider this need in animal husbandry.

WITHOUT THAT BOND

There are some children who are given everything—everything but the most important thing of all, love. They are given plenty of food. Their diapers are changed. Their cribs are clean. They even have toys. They have, however, no person who comes when they cry. No special person picks them up and talks to them. No special person understands their cries, their gestures, their likes and dislikes. Many people care for them. These faces come and go. There is no one person with whom they share that essential bond or attachment.

What happens? These children stop calling for attention. Their smiles fade. They stop cooing and gurgling. They don't reach out to other people. They may fail to gain weight. Strangers are not upsetting, for everyone is a stranger. They'll go to anyone! Or, these children may turn inward and fail to build the language, social, emotional, and physical skills they need to develop.

Who are these children? Such children are often found in orphanages or other institutions where a number of people care for each child. They might also be children whose parents never have time for them and entrust them to a changing series of caregivers. These children may establish a bond with the first or second caregiver, but the rapid turnover of people makes them lose interest in trying.

Has an orphanage or institution in your community changed its program? Many have been turned into day schools.

The story of emotionally deprived babies is not new. There is an old account of a bonding experiment that Frederick II, a Holy Roman Emperor, commanded during the 13th century. Salimbene describes the experiment and its outcome:

> He wanted to find out what kind of speech and what manner of speech children would have when they grew up if they spoke to no one beforehand. So he bade foster mothers and nurses to suckle the children, to bathe and wash them, but in no way to prattle with them, or to speak to them, for he wanted to learn whether they would speak the Hebrew language, which was the oldest, or Greek or Latin, or Arabic, or perhaps the language of their parents, of whom they had been born. But he laboured in vain because the children all died. For they could not live without the petting and joyful faces and loving words of their foster mothers.
>
> —quoted from *A Portable Medical Reader*,
> I.B. Ross and M.M. McLaughlin (eds.),
> New York: Viking Press, 1949

BEYOND THE BOND

At first the baby can't imagine a pleasant world outside his mother's arms. The baby associates this togetherness with feeling warm, satisfied and secure—whole.

Gradually, though, the baby learns that he is a separate person from his mother. He can feel happy, secure and alert even when he is playing with toys and other people.

See unit on *Identity*

Learning that he can do things makes a baby feel confident. See unit on *Competence*.

Many things help the baby learn he is a separate person. For one thing, his parents leave him. He also learns that he has the power to do things on his own. A yell brings a parent on the run. A swipe at the mobile makes it move. A shake of a rattle makes a noise. He tries charming other people and finds that he is an instant hit. Brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, proud grandparents and neighbors shower him with attention and exciting kinds of entertainment.

"He's just doing it to get attention" is true — and he thrives on it! And, like all babies, he deserves it.

The baby begins to reach out to other people because he has learned that he has the power to make others love him.

SEPARATIONS:
letting go

Although a strong attachment to parents helps children to let go when the time comes, the first separations are never easy. During the first three years most children can't bear to let their parents leave them. When parents leave, the baby may cry as if she's been abandoned forever. The toddler clings to his mother when she reaches for her coat. These children may not know that their parents still exist when they are out of sight.

Little by little, though, children work through these fears. For instance, babies play peek-a-boo to make parents disappear and appear again. Older babies crawl out of sight and scuttle back to the spot where they left their parents. Toddlers may even play in a room adjoining the one where their parents are, but they too need to check back for a reassuring kiss or hug. Preschoolers begin to watch the big hand of the clock for the magic hour when their parents return. They begin to realize that their parents will return as promised.

It's not until about a year of age that a baby has the thinking skills to know that an object still exists when not in view.

A PAINFUL PARTING

Many mothers and fathers find it hard to separate, too. Watching their 3-year-old burst into tears when they leave him with a babysitter can give parents a lump in the throat and tears in the eyes as well. Sometimes parents feel guilty about leaving. They hate to cause such suffering. They wonder if they should give up a social life outside the home until the child can handle separations with ease.

Parents, however, have to leave their children. Parents who care for the children all day long need time away to relax and see their friends. Many parents, too, must work outside the home. They are separated from their children daily.

When parents are away from their children all day, they can be especially careful to give them attention when they are together again.

It is hard to prepare very young children like April for a new experience, because they can't picture experiences they've never had. "Tomorrow" does not mean much to a child her age,either.

EASING THE PAIN

Parents can ease their children's fears, and make the road to independence smoother for themselves as well as their children, when they:

PREPARE CHILDREN FOR SEPARATIONS

Parents can talk to children beforehand about where they are going and why: *"Mommy is going to work and Mrs. Moran is going to take care of you every day."* Children need to know when they can expect parents to return: *". . . when you wake up,"* or *". . . when Daddy comes home."* This makes separation less of a shock. It lessens children's feelings that they have been abandoned. Parents should never sneak away from a child.

Sometimes children can part more readily from one parent than another, or from a sibling.

PROVIDE A CONSISTENT ROUTINE THAT CHILDREN CAN COUNT ON

If parents leave for work each day, it's easier for young children to let go of them if they leave at roughly the same time every day. Parents might arrange for a special activity just before they leave. They could read a story or play a record, for instance. Children also feel better if they know that parents will return at a certain time — after a nap, for example, or when the clock says 3:00.

Most grown-ups feel more secure when they know what is going to happen next. Children need a routine even more. Knowing that the separation will last a certain amount of time helps them relax and get involved in the activities at hand. Of course, the unexpected occurs. But in general, children should be able to count on their parents' comings and goings.

GET THEM USED TO NEW PEOPLE GRADUALLY

Whenever possible, parents should leave children with someone they know. They can invite the babysitter to come for a visit once or twice before the sitter stays alone with the child. Or they can spend a day or so at the day care center with the child before the child stays there alone.

Children feel more secure when they know and trust the grown-ups who are taking care of them. But trust takes time to grow. Children gain trust when they see that their parents like and trust their new caregiver. And it's easier to get to know someone new when children are in the security of their own home or when their parent is safely nearby.

Changes are hard on children. It's better if parents try to keep a few regular people caring for their child. This does not mean that children should be left with unsuitable people, however, even if they are friends.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO ACT OUT THEIR FEARS

Acting out the separation helps children feel in control. Playing "peek-a-boo" or "hide-and-seek" helps them see that parents reappear after they disappear. Pretending to be a parent who packs a suitcase and goes on a trip helps the child to understand that people do return. Parents should help their children understand that "good-bye" doesn't mean "forever."

See unit on *Fears*.

Keeping in touch is easy, too. A phone call does wonders. And be sure to let the child see the office where Mommy works, or visit the school where Daddy teaches.

LET CHILDREN TAKE SOMETHING FAMILIAR TO A NEW PLACE

Children need to take along something of their own to a new place. A blanket or toy that reminds them of their parents and their home may help them feel safer in strange places. Or, parents can let them keep something important that belongs to them — a pair of gloves or a purse, for example.

Separations need not be a nightmare for parent and child; separations can even add to the bond between them. If they have built a strong and secure relationship, parent and child can become totally involved in new and challenging experiences and have more to share when they come together again.

Characters:

Sheila Hornbrenner — *a young mother*
Bob Hornbrenner — *Sheila's ex-husband*
April Hornbrenner — *Sheila and Bob's 18-month-old daughter*
Bonnie Hornbrenner — *Bob's mother*
Maeve Caruso — *April's day care teacher*
Gentry Vashon — *a 6-month-old baby in day care*
Rita Vashon — *Gentry's mother*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

Love Me and Leave Me

Eighteen-month-old April Hornbrenner is adjusting to day care. Sheila, her mother, tries to make this adjustment easier by bringing April's favorite things to the center and spending time there with April and her teacher, Maeve Caruso.

Despite all these efforts, April cries every time Sheila leaves. To add to Sheila's worries, she and Bob, her former husband, have to make a big decision—whether April should spend the weekend with Bob. Bob wants very much to have his time with April and help her get to know his family. Sheila understands his feelings but thinks it's the wrong time for April to go. They turn to Maeve for advice.

WHY DO SHEILA AND BOB DECIDE THAT APRIL SHOULD STAY HOME WITH HER MOTHER FOR THE WEEKEND?

Documentary:

Dr. Bettye Caldwell explains the process of bonding that takes place between parents and infants. She explains that when children receive consistent caregiving, they learn to trust and depend on their caregiver. With this trust, children also begin to feel confident enough to allow their caregiver to leave. Independence is the outgrowth of attachment.

Dr. Caldwell states that anyone who allows a child to become attached to him/her has a responsibility to that child. Have the students discuss the implications of that statement.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

Why does April have a hard time adjusting to the day care center?

- Is it too soon for her to let go of her mother?
- Do other children April's age become upset when their parents leave them? When they visit strange places or meet unfamiliar people? Why?
- Are April's fears normal? Or is she upset because her parents give her too much or too little attention? Is part of her anxiety caused by her parents' divorce?
- Why is Gentry "ready" but not April?

Comments: Like most children her age, April finds it hard to leave her mother. Young children are learning that people exist when they are out of sight. They are learning that "good-bye" does not mean forever. It is possible, too, that April takes longer to accept new places and people. Perhaps her parents' divorce has made her more insecure about separations, but it's likely that she would have these feelings regardless.

What does Sheila do to help April feel more secure?

- What are some things that Sheila does to make separation easier for April?
- What does Sheila do to help April adjust to the new day care center?

Comments: Sheila tries to help April deal with separation by making her feel more secure. First, she tries to prepare April for the change by telling her about it the night before and gathering up a few familiar "objects" to take to the new center. Sheila also tries to give April lots of attention when they're together. She holds April and talks to her as much as possible. At night Sheila plays hiding games with April's toys to help April see that things will appear after they disappear.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
STARTING ANEW

How did you feel when you entered this school for the first time?

- What were some of the things you and others did to make you feel more comfortable and secure?
- How would the feelings of a child entering kindergarten be different from or similar to your feelings as you entered school? Do the child's needs differ very much from your own?
- If you were a kindergarten teacher, what plans would you make to help the kindergarten child?
- What plans would you make to help a student your age adjust?

activity #2
CONCERNING A CAREGIVER

You are looking for a person to care for your baby while you work. You interview several people for the job. List 5 or 6 questions to ask during the interview to find out if the person understands the baby's need to form a bond with the caregiver.

Sometimes parents are jealous of a baby's attachment to a substitute or a sitter. How could they be helped to see this attachment as a positive sign?

activity #3
BONDING BLANKS

Complete the sentences in the left hand column by filling in the blank spaces with the appropriate word from the right hand column.

Parents have to learn to INTERPRET their babies' cries, expressions and actions.

Young children feel more secure in strange places when they have FAMILIAR objects or people present.

Young children often have great difficulty SEPARATING from their parents the first few times.

Being able to take care of oneself is called INDEPENDENCE

A strong bond with the parent gives the child the SECURITY to become independent and form relationships with others.

The tendency of baby geese to follow the first moving object they see after hatching is called IMPRINTING

Parents should PREPARE their children for separations.

When parents respond to babies' smiles and gestures as well as their cries, babies learn that there are many ways to get ATTENTION.

The warm and intimate caring and trust between parent and baby is called ATTACHMENT

A child becomes attached to a parent through everyday FEEDING, dressing and playing.

There is a CRITICAL PERIOD during which all animals, including human children, must form an attachment to their mother or another primary caregiver.

Babies CRY less often and for shorter amounts of time in later months if their parents respond quickly and consistently to their cries during the first months.

attachment
feeding
interpret
security
cry
critical period
imprinting
familiar
attention
separating
independence
prepare

The answers have been filled in.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe baby and mother zoo animals, wild animals or household pets for at least 10 minutes. Watching one baby and mother interact, take notes on:
    - different ways the baby gets the mother's attention
    - how the mother responds to the baby's attention getting behaviors
    - different ways the mother cares for the baby.
2. Children and their parents react to separations in different ways. Observe 3 toddlers or preschool children as they say goodbye to their parents in a day care center, nursery school, Head Start center or family day care home. Record:
    - the length of time each child has attended the center.
    - the expression on each child's face as he or she enters the center
    - familiar or favorite objects the child brings from home
    - how long the parent stays
    - what the parent does and says when leaving to help the child say goodbye
    - the child's expression and actions when the parent leaves the room
    - if the child cries, how long it takes him to stop
    - what the teacher does to help the child accept the parent's departure.
3. Set up an interview with a few nurses or doctors. Ask them if they think that different methods of childbirth affect the bonding between parent and baby. For example, what are the advantages of prepared childbirth in which no drugs are used? Ask them about post-delivery procedures. Are parents separated from the baby right away? How often are the baby and parents together during the rest of the stay? How does a bond grow between parents and a newborn baby placed in an incubator or given other special care?
4. Interview teachers of young children at a day care center, Head Start center, nursery school or family day care home. Ask them how teachers can support the attachment between parent and child when the child is at the center.

to discuss

1. Try to remember how it felt to be a young child. Can you remember different occasions when your parents had to leave you? Can you remember how you felt? If you have brothers or sisters, try to recall how they reacted when your parents left. If they reacted differently from each other, why do you think this happened?
2. Can a father develop a strong relationship with his baby if the baby is breast fed?

to research

1. Konrad Lorenz's study on imprinting with geese. (See his book called *King Solomon's Ring.*)
2. Attachment between baby and mother chimpanzees. (Jan van Lawick-Goodall has been studying chimpanzees for over ten years in Tanzania, Africa. *In the Shadow of Man* is her account of her experiences with the chimpanzees. *Learning to Love*, by Harry Harlow is another account of attachment among chimpanzees.)
3. Attachment between mothers and babies in different cultures.
    - What are some ways mothers build a bond with their babies?
    - When do mothers separate from the babies?
    - When are the babies weaned?
    - How do they react?

    (*Infancy in Uganda* by Mary Ainsworth and *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* by Margaret Mead and Martha Wolfenstein are good references.)
4. The effects of institutional life on the baby's ability to become attached to other people. (See Sally Provence and Rose Lipton's *Children in Institutions.*)
5. Different patterns of attachment between babies and mothers, and babies and fathers. (Research is being done on this at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, under the direction of T. Berry Brazelton.)

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that will give you more information on . . .

. . . attachment between parents and babies

Infants and Mothers. T. Berry Brazelton. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1969. (paperback)

Maternal-Infant Bonding. Marshall Klaus and John Kennell. St. Louis, Missouri: C.V. Mosby Company, 1976.

The Roots of Love. Helene S. Arnstein. New York: Bantam Books, 1975. (paperback)

. . . separation

The Magic Years. Selma Fraiberg. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959. (paperback)

Oneness and Separateness: From Infant to Individual. Louise J. Kaplan. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978.

Who Cares for the Baby? Choices in Child Care. Beatrice Marden Glickman and Nesha Bass Springer. New York: Schocken Books, 1978.

. . . bonding between animals

In the Shadow of Man. Jane van Lawick-Goodall. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1971. (paperback)

King Solomon's Ring. Konrad Lorenz. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1952.

Learning to Love. Harry Harlow. San Francisco: Albion Publishing Company, 1973. (paperback)

DISCIPLINE THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

Spare the Rod

131

TO BEGIN...

When most people think of discipline, certain words invariably come to mind — words such as good, bad, reward, punish and control. Most of these words have to do with setting limits on children's behavior and making them behave.

In this unit discipline is looked at in terms of both this immediate goal of controlling behavior and a longer term goal of developing self-discipline.

One interesting way to begin this unit might be to have students write down what they think the meaning and purpose of discipline is. See how many include a reference to developing self-discipline. You could perform this exercise again at the end of the unit to see how students' understanding of discipline has changed.

FROM THE EDITORS

Discipline is one of the most important jobs parents have. Children have to learn how to take care of themselves and live in a world with other people, and it is parents who teach children these things.

According to Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson in *How to Discipline With Love,* approximately 1,823 in 1978.

There are probably more books written on discipline than any other aspect of parenting. This reflects the importance of the subject, and the concern parents have about it. Sometimes though, all this information and advice can be confusing. With so many different viewpoints, how are parents to know what is best for their children?

This booklet attempts to give some perspective to the subject of discipline, and some of the different discipline techniques available to parents. Most important, it provides guidelines for deciding among these different techniques.

THE BIG IDEAS

Discipline should meet both the present and future needs of children. In the short run, children need help controlling their behavior. In the long run, they need to become responsible for their own behavior.

If they don't, they continue to act only in terms of other people's expectations of them. This is generally not a very happy state of affairs for them.

The two goals of discipline are more likely to be achieved when parents respond to the causes of behaviors as well as to the behaviors themselves.

Both goals of discipline are best accomplished when parents use a variety of discipline techniques to meet the needs of different situations.

I am, indeed, a king,
because I know how
to rule myself.

— Pietro Aretino

DISCIPLINE:
THE GREAT DEBATE

Discipline is needed.

There's no doubt about that. Society could not exist if people acted without regard for others. Children are unhappy if they can't control their own impulses or tell right from wrong.

The idea of being an undisciplined child sounds free and gay. It seems like such a child shouldn't have a care in the world. But, on the contrary, children who haven't learned discipline feel lost, insecure, and unloved. See the unit on *Parenting Styles*.

Ask students why they think this is true.

Yet, there is probably no single issue that arouses controversy and concerns parents as much as discipline. To discipline or not to discipline? And if so, how? And when? These are questions that puzzle many parents.

This concern is not new. There has always been controversy about the subject of discipline. In recent years, however, we have learned a great deal about children — about their needs, feelings, differences, and the tasks they must master. Parents and experts are beginning to agree on methods of discipline that take into account the nature and needs of children.

Some parents still wonder and worry, though. This booklet explores some of the questions that parents still ask in the great debate about discipline.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY DISCIPLINE?

— I. M. Wundering
Parentsville, U.S.A.

Much of the confusion about discipline stems from a misunderstanding about what the word itself means. For many people, the word "discipline" has negative associations. To some, it may even mean the same thing as punishment.

In Webster's Third International Dictionary, "education" is listed as a synonym for "discipline."

If we look at the source of the word "discipline," we find that its meaning is positive. "Discipline" comes from the word "disciple," someone who follows the teachings of another person:

> Discipline means a learning experience.

Not punishment. Not tears. It means a chance to learn how to live in a social world. Discipline is not something parents do *to* children. It is something they do *with* children.

WHAT DO PARENTS TEACH BY DISCIPLINE?

— B. Cleer
Central City, U.S.A.

SELF-CONTROL.

RESPONSIBILITY.

SELF-DISCIPLINE.

These are the ultimate goals of discipline. Children must learn to govern their own behavior. They have to know how to make decisions and take care of themselves. They have to learn how to rely on themselves rather than parents or other adults to tell them what to do.

When people do things because they have been told to do so by someone else, we say they are governed by **OUTER CONTROLS**. When people act in ways that they themselves have decided are right, they are following **INNER CONTROLS**:

> The long-range goal of discipline is to help children move from the outer controls of parents, teachers, and other adults to their own inner controls.

Through discipline, parents help the child take over.

This will not take place in the first 5 years of life — or even in the first 15. But parents can help the child get off to a good start during the early years.

Like any other area of growth, however, developing self-discipline takes time. While this process is taking place, parents have to deal with children's day-to-day behaviors. If a child is about to run into the street or hit another child with a baseball bat, there's no time to wait for the long-term goal of discipline. Parents have to stop such behaviors immediately:

> The short-range goal of discipline is to control children's behaviors on a daily basis.

While young children are still learning self-control, they need to be protected from hurting themselves and other people. They must be shown appropriate ways to behave.

Fortunately, the long- and short-range goals of discipline can be worked on at the same time. In fact, the most effective methods of discipline are those that take both goals into account.

WHY DO CHILDREN MISBEHAVE?

O. K. Shute
Totstown, U.S.A.

There's no use denying it.

Children do misbehave. They sometimes act in ways that are not acceptable to their parents or society. However, there are reasons for children's behaviors, and usually they are very understandable.

Looking for the cause is an important step toward discipline.

There are many reasons why children misbehave. Three of the most common are:

PARENTS MAY EXPECT TOO MUCH OF CHILDREN

Sometimes parents expect more of children than their young bodies or minds can handle:

Two-year-old Johnny's parents think that he should be toilet trained by now and spank him if he wets his pants.

Five-year-old Susie's parents tell her to sit still when she becomes bored and fidgety during a long evening at a restaurant.

Many of the ways we expect young children to behave are not consistent with the biological nature of the human organism.

CHILDREN MAY BE DEFENDING THEIR IDENTITY

At other times, children's behaviors may be attempts to get the attention they need, or to protect their feelings or property:

Three-year-old Tommy's sister tells him the block tower he built looks silly, so he hits her.

Five-year-old Bonnie feels that her father is ignoring her when he reads the newspaper, so she turns up the volume of the television very loud.

When we feel a threat to ourselves, we often respond in hostile or aggressive ways. See also unit on *Identity*.

For a fuller development of this concept, see the unit on *Growing Up*.

CHILDREN MAY JUST BE TRYING TO GROW UP

Sometimes, children's efforts to learn the things their parents want them to learn seem like misbehaviors to parents:

Two-year-old Wendy knocks over her glass of milk as she tries to feed herself.

Four-year-old Mikey picks his mother a beautiful bouquet of flowers — from his neighbor's garden.

Can students think of other reasons why children misbehave?

It is important to understand that children want to grow up. However, they need time to practice new skills, and they have to be told what the rules are. While they are learning, children do things in the best ways they know. Hitting another child may be the only way Jimmy knows to get him to play. Jennifer may think she's doing something good when she cuts her own hair. That's why parents need to look for what children are trying to do when they misbehave:

> By identifying the cause of their misbehavior, parents can help children learn how to behave in more successful ways.

They can work toward both the long- and short-range goals of discipline.

This does not mean that parents have to like or accept children's misbehaviors. Nor does it mean that they will always be able to figure out the cause of misbehaviors. It simply means that parents should try to understand WHY a child is misbehaving before they decide HOW to respond to the behavior.

Correcting a misbehavior without treating the cause is like putting green paint on a wilted plant. Things may look better on the surface — but the problem is still there.

If misbehavior is chronic, a child may be telling parents that something is very wrong in his or her life. In such a case, parents will have to look very closely to find the source of the problem and eliminate it, or seek help from a child guidance clinic or counselor.

WHICH DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUE IS BEST?

— *U. Know*
Kiddies Korner, U.S.A.

There is no one right way to discipline.

In fact, a one-track mind is not the best way to discipline. There are a variety of ways to stop misbehaviors and encourage responsible behavior:

> When parents know and use a number of techniques, they are more likely to achieve both the long- and short-term goals of discipline.

When they combine these techniques with efforts to find the causes of misbehaviors, their chances of reaching these goals will be even greater.

Here are some strategies that parents might want to include in their discipline repertoire:

Have students talk about which of these techniques were used in the film. How did they work out?

Which techniques do students feel most comfortable with? Are there any they would not use? Why?

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY

Let Children Make Some Decisions and Choices

One good way to teach responsibility is to give the children as much as possible.

June is helping her mother plan a party for her third birthday. Mrs. Hamning asks June to decide whether they should serve lemonade or fruit juice.

Five year-old Jon is taking a bath and splashing water all over. His father asks: "Do you want to close the shower curtain now or wipe up the water when you finish?"

Involving children as much as possible in decision-making avoids many potential misbehaviors and also does a lot to help children develop an internal frame of reference for guiding their behaviors.

It may be difficult for some students to see this as a form of discipline. You may have to be sure they understand the meaning of the word discipline as used in this unit. Activity #3 is designed to further clarify this technique.

Give Reasons for Your Rules

Understanding the reasons for rules makes it easier to remember them.

And also increases the motivation to follow them.

On the way to the park, 3 year-old Larry runs toward the street. His father yells at him and pulls him back, then explains what might have happened if he had run into the street and why he must look both ways first.

As she is paying for her purchase at the drug store, Mrs. Gomez asks Maria to help an elderly lady open the door. Maria is looking at toys and doesn't want to go. Mrs. Gomez explains that people have to help each other, and that the woman is not strong enough to open the door.

Remove Children from Situations They Can't Handle

If children are too young to understand, or there's no way to change the cause, it may be possible to change the situation.

Nine month-old Sacha crawls after lamp cords, ashtrays, and other dangerous items. Her parents remove such items from her reach.

Two year-old Tommy starts crying when his older sisters won't let him join their tea party. His father takes him into the other room and plays a game with him.

Redirect Children's Behavior

Often there is a way to let children do something in a better place or a safer way

Eighteen month old Jessie loves to knock over his cup of milk or juice and watch how it spills. His father puts him in the bathtub and gives him containers so he can pour water in and out.

When Mr. Smith takes 1 year old Jennifer with him to the grocery store, she reaches for everything on the shelves. Now Mr. Smith always gives her one or two of the colorful boxes from his cart to look at and handle.

Parents can also set up the environment to *prevent* discipline problems — for example removing things that a child shouldn't touch while the child is too young to know this.

Let Children Learn What the Consequences of Their Actions Are

When a child is old enough to understand, and the results will not be dangerous, experience can sometimes be the best teacher.

Mrs. Barry warns 3 year old Paula that if she keeps banging her toy truck like that it will break. Paula keeps banging the truck. It breaks.

Every time they go somewhere, Mr. Washington has to hurry Roscoe along. One day as they are getting ready to go swimming he doesn't nag at Roscoe. They miss the bus and have to wait half an hour in the hot sun.

Punish the Child

Scolding, light spanking, or other forms of punishment may be appropriate in some situations.

Six month old Laura crawls up to a pair of hot tongs near the outdoor grill and starts to touch them. Mrs. Walters slaps her hand and says, "No, No! Hot, Hot!"

Mr. Holbrook has told Peter several times not to ride his bicycle in the street. Peter rides out into the street again. Mr. Holbrook tells Peter that he may not ride his bicycle again for a week.

Remember, though, that punishment is not always the most effective way to discipline. It may achieve the short-term goal of controlling behaviors, but:

If used continually, punishment can result in negative side effects such as hostility or withdrawal.

Have students consider the effects of punishment on the child's self-esteem. Withdrawing love, in particular, can hit at the core of the child's sense of worth. (See unit on *Loving Your Children.*)

Punishment is most effective when it is used sparingly and is applied immediately after the misbehavior. Parents should also be sure that children understand why they are being punished.

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE A DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUE?

— G. Whizz
Childston, U.S.A.

O.K.

You think you know why a child is misbehaving. You are aware of the variety of techniques you can use to stop misbehavior and encourage self-discipline. So how do you know which technique to use?

There are no hard and fast rules about which discipline technique is best for which misbehavior:

> The choice of method depends on the parent, the child, and the situation.

Because they are different. See unit on *Children's Individuality.*

Different children respond best to different methods of discipline. Different situations call for different techniques. And parents must feel comfortable about what they are doing if discipline is to be effective.

Common sense plays a large role. For example, a parent would not allow the natural consequences to take place if a baby were about to touch a hot stove. Instead, the parents would remove the child from the situation immediately. In addition:

> The age of the child makes a difference.

In general, parents will find that younger children need more direct control. They need limits set for them and protection from harm. As children get older, parents can make more use of reasoning, choices, and natural consequences.

It is important that parents not try to reason with a child before he or she can understand words.

With discipline, as in all other areas of growth, it helps to have a sense of perspective and humor. Parents should not be surprised or upset if a child sometimes repeats a misbehavior. Children don't learn things the first time around. In the long run, though, consistent teaching will work out. Slowly but surely, children will move toward self-discipline.

Characters:

Sandy Marshall — *a young mother*
Ted Marshall — *Sandy's husband*
Marc Marshall — *5-year-old son of Sandy and Ted*
Portia Marshall — *Marc's 3-year-old sister*
Marcella Wilson — *Sandy's sister*
Gary Wilson — *Marcella's 8-year-old son*
Sonny Marshall — *Ted's brother*
Grandma & Grandpa Marshall — *Ted's mother and father*

Documentary:

A parent talks about redirecting children's energies when their behavior is not appropriate, and giving them opportunities to contribute to the household.

Have students discuss how these techniques can help develop self-discipline in children.

FILM REVIEW SECTION

Spare the Rod

Sandy and Ted Marshall disagree about how to discipline their two children, Portia and Marc. Sandy believes in offering children reasons and choices. Ted, on the other hand, thinks children should be told what to do, and firm measures should be taken when they don't behave.

Sandy and Ted's disagreement comes to a head at Grandma's birthday party the next day. Ted's brother Sonny, whom Ted thinks is irresponsible and undisciplined, offends Grandpa with his "street language." Grandpa slaps him. Sonny is humiliated, and the whole family is upset.

In the car on the way home, Marc takes off his seat belt and Ted tells him to put it back on. When asked why, Ted replies: "Because I said so." Sandy adds: "Because if Daddy had to stop the car quickly, you might get hurt." Marc sits back and puts on his seat belt. Ted begins to understand what Sandy has been trying to tell him about discipline.

WHAT HAS SANDY BEEN TRYING TO TELL TED ABOUT DISCIPLINE?

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

How do Sandy's and Ted's ideas about discipline differ?

- Do they have the same goals for discipline? What are they?
- Where did they each get their ideas about discipline?
- Are Sandy's ideas realistic? Or are they just "book-learning," as Marcella says?
- When parents disagree about a subject such as discipline, how do they decide what's right?

Comments: Sandy and Ted both want their children to learn to take care of themselves. What they disagree about is the way to reach this goal. Ted feels that the methods his father used to raise him are best, while Sandy has adopted methods she's read about at school. The best way to decide what's right for their children is to watch how their children react to the different methods.

How do Sandy and Ted deal with their children's misbehaviors?

- Was Marc misbehaving when he refused to go back to bed? When he defied his father at Grandma's birthday party? When he took off his seat belt? In each case, what did Ted think? Sandy?
- Why did Marc act the way he did on each of these occasions?
- How did Ted handle each of these situations? What did his methods achieve in terms of the short- and long-term goals of discipline?
- How does Sandy discipline the children? Was she disciplining when she talked with the children about what they wanted to do next? When she explained to Marc why he needed a seat belt? How?

Comments: Ted deals with what he considers to be Marc's misbehavior by ordering him to stop and by punishing him if he doesn't obey. Although these methods are successful in stopping misbehaviors, Sandy feels they will not help the children become more self-disciplined. She believes the best way to discipline children is to encourage them to make choices and decisions, and to give them reasons why they can or cannot do things.

What went wrong with Sonny?

- What was "wrong" with Sonny?
- How did this happen?
- If Ted and Sonny had the same parents, how did Ted "turn out" so well? Or did Ted turn out well?
- Do different children need different methods of discipline?

Comments: Sonny never learned to take responsibility for his own behavior. He is dependent on outside forces to tell him what is right and wrong, what to do, and what not to do. Some students may think that Ted, too, is dependent — on the expectations of others.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

For each of the following situations describe:

- what you think might be the cause(s) of the misbehavior

Have students refer to the causes on page 3 and the techniques on page 5.

- what you would do if you were the child's parent
- what the long- and short-term effects of your actions might be.

Mrs. Jones lets 2-year-old Jennie play in the backyard of their farmhouse. She tells Jennie to stay away from the tractor parked outside the barn. Mrs. Jones looks out the window to check on Jennie and sees her trying to climb onto the tractor.

Three-year-old Timmy is grocery shopping with his father, Mr. Davis. Mr. Davis is rushing around trying to finish so he can get home in time to watch the football game on TV. He looks at the list and says: "Oh, no, we forgot to get cat food and peanut butter." He tells Timmy to stay with the cart while he goes to get cat food. Timmy, however, goes off to look for peanut butter. He finds it and picks up the biggest jar. On the way back to the cart, Timmy drops the jar of peanut butter and it breaks.

Five-year-old Jose and his friend, Pedro, are playing with their cars and trucks in Jose's backyard. Jose's father, Carlos, is weeding in the garden and keeping an eye on the boys. Everything is going fine until both boys decide they need the dumptruck at the same time. They start fighting and pulling on the dumptruck.

activity #2
PUTTING THE CHILD IN CHARGE

Parents don't have to wait until their children misbehave to discipline them. Parents teach their children self-discipline by letting them make choices and decisions whenever possible.

Give at least two examples of how parents could help their children become self-disciplined in each of the following everyday situations.

For example, a parent could give a child a *choice* between 2 or 3 outfits. Then, the parent could let the child *decide* whether he or she wanted to get dressed alone or with help.

Getting Dressed

Playtime

Housecleaning

Running Errands

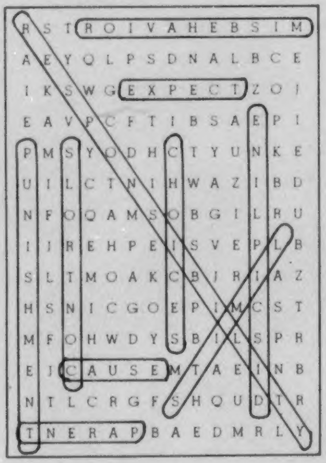
Supper

Bed Time

activity #3
DISCIPLINE-GRAM

Fill in the missing word in each of the following sentences. Then find each of these words in the chart below. The hidden words may go up, down, from left to right, from right to left, or diagonally.

1. DISCIPLINE should be a learning experience for children.
2. The long range goal of discipline is to help children move from outer to inner CONTROLS.
3. Looking for the CAUSE of a misbehavior is an important step toward discipline.
4. A MISBEHAVIOR is a behavior that is not acceptable to a child's parents or society.
5. One of the most common causes of misbehaviors is that parents EXPECT more of children than they can do.
6. When children are young, parents usually need to use discipline methods that set LIMITS and protect them from harm.
7. As children get older, parents can make more use of reasons and CHOICES.
8. One of the best ways to help children learn self-discipline is to give them RESPONSIBILITY.
9. If used continually, PUNISHMENT can have negative side effects.
10. The discipline technique a parent uses depends on the PARENT, child, and situation.



R	S	T	R	O	I	V	A	H	E	B	S	I	M
A	E	Y	Q	L	P	S	D	N	A	L	B	C	E
I	K	S	W	G	E	X	P	E	C	T	Z	O	I
E	A	V	P	C	F	T	I	B	S	A	E	P	I
P	M	S	Y	O	D	H	C	T	Y	U	N	K	E
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M	F	O	H	W	D	Y	S	B	I	L	S	P	R
E	J	C	A	U	S	E	M	T	A	E	I	N	B
N	T	L	C	R	G	F	S	H	Q	U	D	T	R
T	N	E	R	A	P	B	A	E	D	M	R	L	Y

The answers have been filled in.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe parents disciplining their children for misbehaviors in supermarkets, department stores, parks and playgrounds, your neighborhood, and other public places. In each case, make note of:

   how the child is misbehaving
   why the child seems to be misbehaving
   how the child is disciplined
   whether the parent's response meets the two goals of discipline
   whether you thought the child's behavior was really a misbehavior, as the parent did
   how you would have handled the situation.

   Write up a summary of your observations.

2. Conduct a survey among parents in your neighborhood to find out what they think and do about discipline. Develop a short series of questions and ask everyone the same questions. Then, analyze your findings:

   Is there a consensus about discipline?
   On what points do people agree and disagree?

3. With your classmates, make a list of common misbehaviors in young children. Then beside each misbehavior, list some possible causes for each misbehavior:

   When seen next to their causes, do all of these behaviors really seem to be misbehaviors?
   What is a misbehavior?

Students may also find that a behavior may be a misbehavior in one context (for example, throwing a ball in the house) but not in another (for example, throwing a ball outside).

to discuss

1. Most of us learn attitudes toward discipline from our parents. We tend to discipline our own children in the same ways we were disciplined. Usually we don't even realize we are doing this. Think of the ways you were disciplined as a child:

   What do you think you learned from each of these methods?
   Were some more effective than others?
   Which would you want to use with your own children?

2. Think back on your own experiences disciplining your children — for example, as an older brother or sister, or as a babysitter:

   What were some of the different situations you faced?
   How did you handle them?
   What methods of discipline were most successful?
   Which ones didn't work? Why?

3. Organize a classroom debate around the issue of whether or not children should be punished:

   What are the different methods of punishment?
   Are some methods of punishment better than others?

4. You are thinking of getting married. Both you and the person you are in love with want children, but you have not talked about raising them. You have been reading a lot about discipline and want to know more about how your partner feels about the subject:

   How would you start a conversation?
   What ideas would you want to discuss?

GRAB BAG

5. What can the word "discipline" mean in different contexts — for example, in the home, in school, or in the army? What kind of discipline would you want your children to learn?

As James L. Hymes, Jr., points out in *The Child Under Six:*

> *There are occasions in which straight obedience is called for. We do what the policeman says because he says it. In the Armed Forces, ours is just to do or die — we jump when the command is snapped. In a traffic jam we obey the officer's signal. . . Our discipline must include the capacity for this kind of obedience. But. . . the rare times when blind obedience is needed are highly exceptional. Ninety-nine times out of one hundred no policeman is around except the one that we all have to carry inside of us. We are on our own. No one makes us be good.*

to research

1. How parents in different cultures discipline their children. You might want to focus on the difference between discipline methods in a totalitarian country like Russia and a democracy like ours. (See Urie Bronfenbrenner's *Two Worlds of Childhood: U.S. and U.S.S.R.*).
2. The history of discipline in this country. Have our attitudes and methods changed? In what way? Are these changes related to changes in our economy? Politics? Knowledge about children?

11.

3. B. F. Skinner and the behavior modification approach to discipline. (See *Walden Two* by B. F. Skinner). People who use this method of discipline believe that behavior can be changed by reinforcing desirable behaviors and ignoring undesirable behaviors:

   How would you handle the situations in Activities #1 and #2 using this approach? Do you think this approach is an effective way to achieve the long- and short-term goals of discipline?

There are a number of books for parents that use the behavior modification approach. Among them are:

- *Parents are Teachers: A Child Management Program.* Wesley Becker. Champagne, Illinois: Research Press Co., 1971.
- *Behavior Modification with Children.* Alexander Tymchuy. Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas, 1974.

4. Other methods of discipline. Some of the ones you might want to explore are: Parent Effectiveness Training, contracting, mutual problem solving, and the family council.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . ***an approach to discipline.***

A Guide to Discipline. Jeannette W. Galambos. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1969. (paperback)

A Parent's Guide to Child Discipline. Rudolf Dreikurs and Loren Grey. New York: Hawthorn Books, 1970. (paperback)

Also, sections from:

The Child Under Six. James L. Hymes. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 2nd edition, 1974.

Your Child's Self-Esteem. Dorothy Corkille Briggs. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1970.

. . . ***different methods of discipline.***

How to Discipline with Love. Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson. New York: New American Library, 1978. (paperback)

P.E.T., Parent Effectiveness Training. Dr. Thomas Gordon. New York: New American Library, 1970. (paperback)

. . . ***other perspectives on discipline.***

Two Worlds of Childhood: U.S. and U.S.S.R. Urie Bronfrenbrenner. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970. (paperback)

Walden Two. B. F. Skinner. New York: Macmillan, 1948. (paperback)

NUTRITION:
IT'S HABIT FORMING

What's Cookin'?

TO BEGIN...

There is much to the old saying: "You are what you eat." Food is fuel for life. How we eat can affect both the length and the quality of our lives.

Despite the fact that what we eat has such an important effect on our well-being, most of us are not conscious of *why* we eat *what* we eat. The emphasis in this unit, then, is on the formation of eating habits.

The quiz on the next page is one possible way to begin this unit. It is designed to help students see how they have already acquired beliefs about food and eating — many of which may be false. Have them discuss where they think they acquired these attitudes.

FROM THE EDITORS

Most of us today are aware of the importance of good nutrition — especially for young children. We know that what we eat affects our physical, emotional, and mental development. We know that many present-day health problems are the result of poor eating patterns.

But food habits don't just happen. They are learned. This booklet is about how young children acquire their food likes and dislikes, their feelings about food, and their patterns of eating. It discusses how parents can help their children develop good nutrition habits, and provides some basic nutrition information to ensure a healthier life for both you and your children.

THE BIG IDEAS

The attitudes toward food that are formed in childhood are apt to last all through life.

Using food as a reward or punishment, or insisting that children eat everything on their plates, can cause poor attitudes toward food.

Offering a variety of good foods in a pleasant atmosphere encourages good nutrition habits.

HOW'S YOUR NUTRITION IQ?

	True	or	False
1. A fat baby is a healthy baby.	☐		☐
2. Young children should take vitamin pills to be sure they get all the nutrients they need.	☐		☐
3. Snacking is bad for children.	☐		☐
4. Children need at least two servings of meat each day.	☐		☐
5. There are some foods that children have to learn to like, because they are the only source of certain nutrients.	☐		☐

All False.

AN AFTERNOON WITH DR. EATWELL

All parents want their children to eat well. But making Larry eat his peas or Tanya drink her milk is not enough to ensure good nutrition. In fact, "making" children eat foods they don't like can backfire and produce poor eating habits.

Parents have to look at more than what they give their children to eat. They have to pay attention to what they are teaching children about eating, for the attitudes toward food that children learn from their parents will influence what children eat for many years to come.

Parents, then, have a chance to ensure good nutrition for their children long after their children have grown up and left home. To show you how parents can take advantage of this opportunity, we have produced a television interview with an imaginary nutrition expert. Here is what we think Dr. Eatwell would have to say about the nutrition habit.

HOST:
(brightly)

Good afternoon, all you people out there in TV land. This is Dick Cavetty, your host on The Parent Show.

Today my guest is Dr. Eatwell, the well-known nutritionist. Dr. Eatwell has already answered many of your questions about children and nutrition in his weekly column, "Into the Mouths of Babes." I know you'll be eager to hear what Dr. Eatwell has to say today, because he's going to tell us exactly what parents should feed their children.

DR. EATWELL:

Actually, Dick, that's not true.

You see, there is no one right way to feed children. As long as children get the nutrients they need, it doesn't matter what type of diet they follow. Ethnic foods, vegetarian diets and other common menus can all supply the nutrients children need to grow up strong and healthy.

For example, traditional Black American diets might provide protein through black-eyed peas and rice, Jewish American diets through chopped chicken livers, and Chinese American diets through egg foo yung. Strict vegetarians, however, run the risk of developing a vitamin B_{12} (found [illegible]ly in foods of animal origin) deficiency if they do not take a supplement.

HOST:
(taken aback)

Oh. You mean there aren't any rules parents should follow in feeding their children?

DR. EATWELL:

No, I didn't say that. Of course there are some general guidelines. In the first place, parents should be aware that they are teaching their children eating habits and attitudes that, in most cases, will last a lifetime:

Nutrition habits — both good and bad — are formed in childhood.

They are taught by parents, and they are not easily changed in later years.

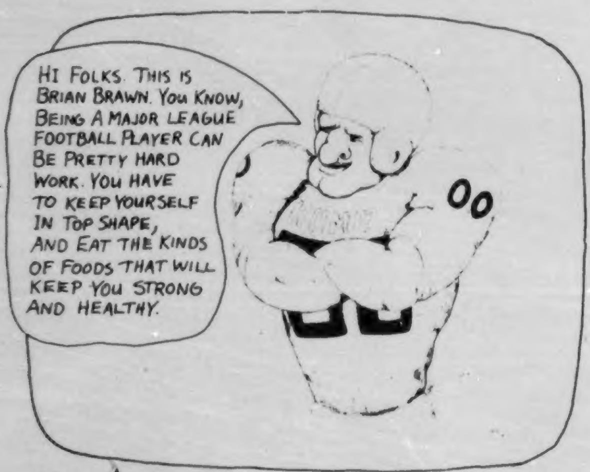
HOST: What do children learn from their parents about eating?

DR. EATWELL: First of all, in their early years children learn to like and dislike certain foods. For the most part, we develop a taste for what we eat. Eskimos learn to like raw fish. West Africans love peanuts and yams. And Mexicans depend on their beans and rice.

It's the same thing in our country. If children are given lots of fruits and vegetables when they're young, they'll grow up liking those foods. If, on the other hand, they get lots of soda pop and potato chips, that's problablу what they'll continue to eat when they're older.

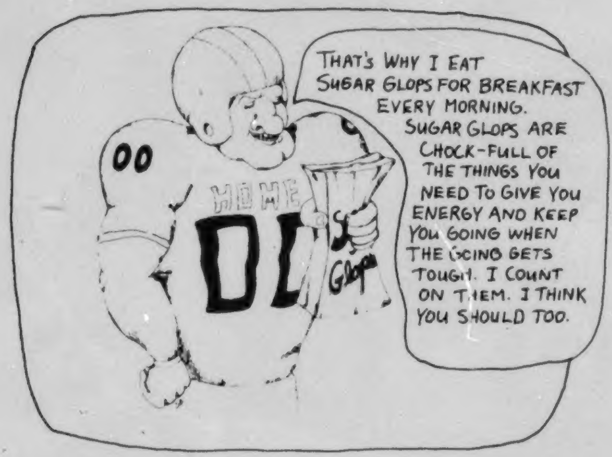
Children are also more willing to try new foods than we might imagine. A study done at Ohio State University showed that between the ages of 1 and 2 years, 77% were willing to try new foods. By age 4, this dropped to 7%.

HOST: Speaking of sweets, it's time for us to hear from our sponsor. Don't go away. We'll be right back.


HI FOLKS. THIS IS BRIAN BRAWN. YOU KNOW, BEING A MAJOR LEAGUE FOOTBALL PLAYER CAN BE PRETTY HARD WORK. YOU HAVE TO KEEP YOURSELF IN TOP SHAPE, AND EAT THE KINDS OF FOODS THAT WILL KEEP YOU STRONG AND HEALTHY.
00

Approximately 40% of commercials for children are for cereals. Often these advertise the most expensive, least nutritious products, but they imply, as this ad does, that they will keep children healthy.

On a typical Saturday between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m., a child is likely to see nearly 70 commercial messages urging him or her to eat or drink sweetened foods.


00
HOME
00
Sugar Glops
THAT'S WHY I EAT SUGAR GLOPS FOR BREAKFAST EVERY MORNING. SUGAR GLOPS ARE CHOCK-FULL OF THE THINGS YOU NEED TO GIVE YOU ENERGY AND KEEP YOU GOING WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH. I COUNT ON THEM. I THINK YOU SHOULD TOO.

DR. EATWELL:	Now, that's a good example of one of the problems that parents face. Children today are bombarded with ads for food containing large amounts of sugar. Sugar coated cereals. Candy. Soft drinks. Cakes and cookies. Television is always telling children why they should eat these "empty calorie" products.

See unit on *Children and TV.*

For those members of the audience who don't know, by the way, an "EMPTY CALORIE" food is one that fills you up but doesn't supply any nutrients.

HOST: (visibly uncomfortable)	Our sponsor would just love to hear that. Why don't we talk about . . .
DR. EATWELL: (warming up to his subject)	And TV continues to do this — even though it's been proven that a high intake of sugar can lead to tooth decay, obesity, diabetes, and many other health problems.

The most widespread disease in this country is dental cavities.

HOST: (starting to panic)	Yes, well, as I was saying . . .
DR. EATWELL:	Did you know, for example, that 17 percent of all one-year-old children are overweight?
HOST:	No. No, I can't say that I did.
DR. EATWELL:	And did you know that 8 out of 10 of these overweight babies will grow up to be overweight adults? You see, once extra fat cells have been formed, it becomes very difficult to lose weight.
HOST: (shocked)	Oh, my. Really? That's terrible.

DR. EATWELL: It is, isn't it. It's really sad that in spite of all our knowledge, there are still many health problems in this country that are directly related to poor diets. And most of these problems begin in early childhood.

According to a 1972 U.S. Department of Agriculture study, 70% of the American people are subsisting on poor diets.

HOST: I guess we can definitely say that parents should never let their children have snacks.

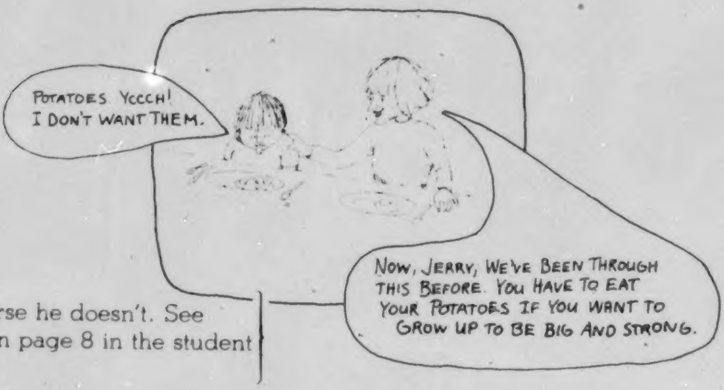
DR. EATWELL: No, we can't say that. Snacking has become a way of life in our country. In some families, snacks are even the basic pattern of eating.

And preschoolers need some food between meals, since their stomachs can't hold much food at one time.

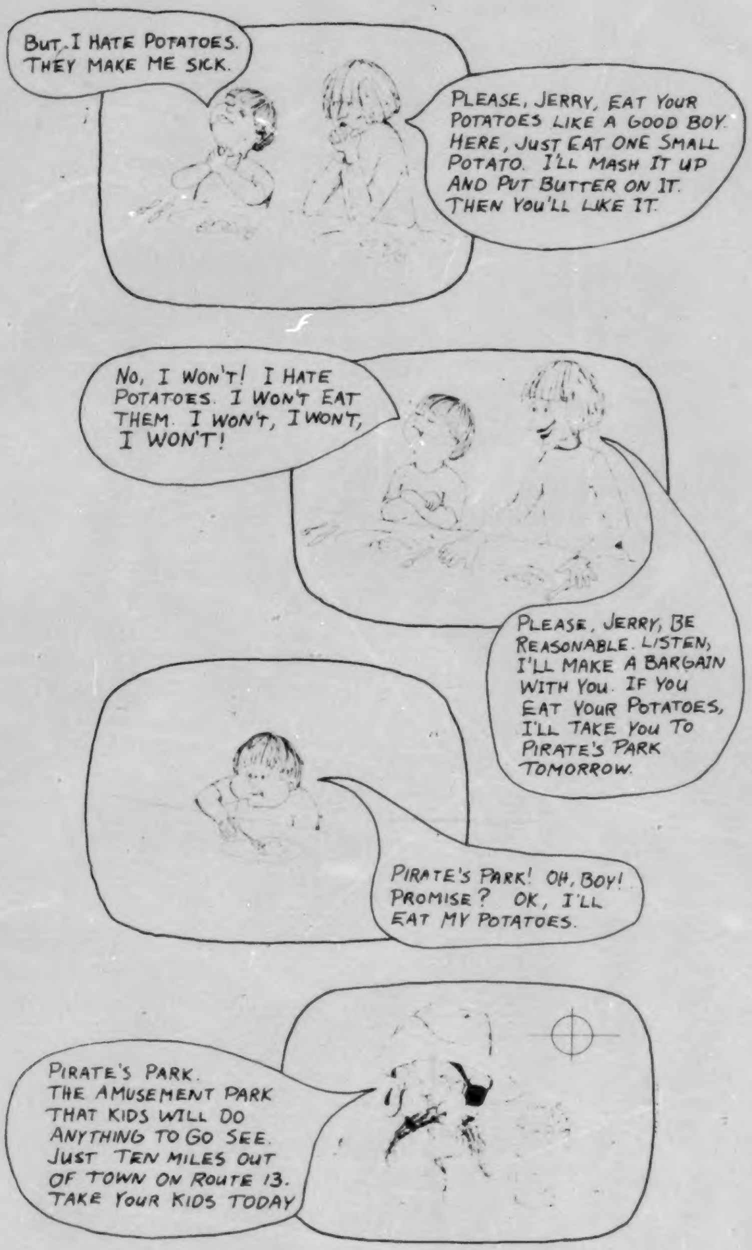
But there's no reason why snacking has to mean poor nutrition. There's no law that says snacks have to be candy bars, soda pop and chocolate chip cookies. Snacks can just as easily be fruit, cheese and nuts. Pizza, peanut butter sandwiches, and milkshakes are other examples of tasty snacks that provide children with nutrients as well as calories.

Also: raw vegetables, frozen juice popsicles, sandwich meats cut into interesting shapes with a cookie cutter, or celery sticks filled with peanut butter and topped with raisins to make "ants on a log." Older children can have popcorn, nuts, and seeds.

HOST: This is all very interesting. However, we have to take another break for a word from our sponsor. Please stay tuned.


POTATOES. YCCCH! I DON'T WANT THEM.
NOW, JERRY, WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS BEFORE. YOU HAVE TO EAT YOUR POTATOES IF YOU WANT TO GROW UP TO BE BIG AND STRONG.

Of course he doesn't. See chart on page 8 in the student guide.


BUT, I HATE POTATOES. THEY MAKE ME SICK.
PLEASE, JERRY, EAT YOUR POTATOES LIKE A GOOD BOY. HERE, JUST EAT ONE SMALL POTATO. I'LL MASH IT UP AND PUT BUTTER ON IT. THEN YOU'LL LIKE IT.
NO, I WON'T! I HATE POTATOES. I WON'T EAT THEM. I WON'T, I WON'T, I WON'T!
PLEASE, JERRY, BE REASONABLE. LISTEN, I'LL MAKE A BARGAIN WITH YOU. IF YOU EAT YOUR POTATOES, I'LL TAKE YOU TO PIRATE'S PARK TOMORROW.
PIRATE'S PARK! OH, BOY! PROMISE? OK, I'LL EAT MY POTATOES.
PIRATE'S PARK. THE AMUSEMENT PARK THAT KIDS WILL DO ANYTHING TO GO SEE. JUST TEN MILES OUT OF TOWN ON ROUTE 13. TAKE YOUR KIDS TODAY

HOST:
(confidently)

Well, that mother certainly was clever. Did you see how she got her little boy to eat his potatoes by promising him a reward? That was really a great idea, wasn't it?

DR. EATWELL:

Actually, that was about the worst thing she could have done. By bribing her child to eat something he didn't like, that mother made eating an emotional rather than a nutritional issue. I wouldn't be at all surprised if that child started to use eating as a way to blackmail his parents into giving him what he wants:

As the Riley children were able to do.

Forcing children to eat ~~things~~ they don't like, or using food to reward or punish them, ~~can~~ create negative attitudes toward food.

HOST:
(confused)

But how else can you get children to eat things that are good for them?

DR. EATWELL:

By offering children a variety of nutritious foods when they are young. In this way they will develop a taste for foods that provide a balance of nutrients. If children reject certain foods, that doesn't mean they're going to dislike them forever. All children go through stages where they don't want to eat certain foods, or want to eat the same foods all the time. That's perfectly normal.

Also, by offering small servings and foods that are attractive. How foods look, taste, and feel in their mouths is very important to children.

And if children do develop a permanent dislike for some foods, so what? Don't we as adults have our likes and dislikes? There are plenty of other foods to fill children's nutritional needs. If Jerry really hates potatoes, he can get the carbohydrate he needs from breads and rice. If Susie hates meat, then milk, cheese, eggs and fish can supply her with protein. If a child hates spinach and broccoli, there are plenty of other good vegetables to choose from to get their vitamins and minerals.

Parents should also respect their children's appetites. Different children need different amounts of food. Even the same child may vary in the amount he or she needs at different times. As they grow, children's caloric needs change. Their bodies may require more food at some times, less at others. The worst thing for a parent to do is to become anxious about how much a child eats:

Poor eating habits are begun rather than ended when parents coax children to eat.

Children's activities also affect their appetites. The beginning of an illness, traveling, visitors in the home, hot weather, teething, or an emotional upset can also affect a child's appetite.

HOST:

Well, then, Dr. Eatwell, are there certain things that parents of young children should keep in mind?

DR. EATWELL: (emphatically) Yes, indeed, there are. First of all, I'd say that:

Parents should be informed about nutrition.

There are many popular misconceptions about nutrition that have no basis at all in fact. For example, the ideas that a fat baby is a healthy baby, or that carrots make your hair curly, or that fish is brain food are nothing but myths. Parents who abide by such myths are only helping their children develop poor nutrition habits.

What other myths have students heard? Where did they learn these myths?

HOST: What about the notion that parents should give their children vitamin pills, because the more vitamins they get the better?

DR. EATWELL: Another myth. Actually:

Too much of a nutrient can be as harmful as too little.

Misconceptions like these are why it's important for parents to have basic information about food and nutrition.

Let me show you a chart from my latest book, *Food is My Bag.* This chart outlines the basic NUTRIENTS we all need to stay strong and healthy, and the foods in which they're contained. Although there are more than 50 nutrients needed by the body, the 9 listed on this slide are the most important. Since each nutrient can be obtained from many different foods, eating a variety of foods is the best approach.

Could we have that slide please?

It is not only what nutrients do once the body gets them, but also how they interact with each other that counts. No single nutrient can function properly alone. For example, it takes calcium to build strong bones. But without vitamin D, no calcium is absorbed from the intestines.

After water and sometimes fat, protein is the most plentiful substance in the body.

THE BIG NINE

Nutrients	Functions	Food Sources
PROTEINS	• Build and repair tissues • Used to form enzymes and hormones • Help make blood and fight infection	Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk, milk products, peas, beans, and nuts

Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk and milk products are complete proteins. They contain all the 8 essential amino acids needed by the body. Peas, beans, and nuts are incomplete proteins. They lack 1 or more essential amino acids and must be combined with another protein to produce a complete protein.

FATS	• Supply energy • Keep skin healthy • Carry vitamins	Butter, cream, margarine, oil, and fats
CARBOHYDRATES	• Supply energy • Help body use other nutrients	Breads, cereals, rice, pastas, some fruits and vegetables, peas and beans, sugar, jelly and honey
VITAMIN A	• Aids vision • Protects against night blindness • Helps keep skin healthy	Liver, eggs, dark green and yellow vegetables, deep yellow fruits, milk and milk products
B VITAMINS (B$_1$, B$_2$, Niacin)	• Help nervous system function • Help change food into energy • Promote appetite and digestion • Keep eyes, skin and mouth healthy	Pork, beef, fish, liver, breads and cereals, wheat germ, eggs, peas and beans, potatoes, green leafy vegetables, milk and milk products, peanuts
VITAMIN C	• Keeps gums healthy • Helps form material that holds cells together • Helps body fight infection	Citrus fruits, strawberries, melons, tomatoes, dark green vegetables, cauliflower, potatoes and cabbage
VITAMIN D	• Helps absorb calcium and phosporus from food and send it to the bones	Milk, liver, fish liver oils, eggs
CALCIUM	• Builds teeth and bones • Helps blood clot • Helps nerves and muscles function	Milk, cheese, other milk products, sardines, shellfish, and green leafy vegetables

The most abundant mineral in the body.

IRON	• Combines with protein to form hemoglobin in blood	Liver, red meats, shellfish, eggs, peas and beans, green leafy vegetables, dried prunes, raisins and apricots, molasses, breads and cereals

Women of child-bearing age require more iron than men.

DR. EATWELL: This is the kind of information all parents should be aware of. Sound nutrition knowledge like this can help parents choose a varied diet that will provide children with all the needed nutrients.

HOST: What else should parents do?

DR. EATWELL: Well, for one thing:

Parents can involve children in the preparation and selection of food.

This also increases their feelings of competence, and stimulates children's senses. See units on *Competence* and *The Need for Early Stimulation.*

When parents are preparing dinner, for example, they can say to children: "Now we need a vegetable. Should we have peas or carrots?" Then children can help wash and cook the vegetables. In this way, children can learn about foods and develop good attitudes toward them at the same time.

HOST: I never thought of that. Anything else?

DR. EATWELL: Yes, there's one more thing:

Parents should try to make mealtimes a pleasant experience.

Bruno Bettelheim said:

> ***Food intake represents one of the child's first contacts with the outside world. It is an activity around which personal relationships first develop and around which they may first break down with the most far-reaching consequences.***

Mealtimes can provide opportunities to discuss the day's events, to plan outings, or to learn new things. If mealtimes are relaxed and happy, children will begin to associate the nutritious foods you serve with good feelings.

HOST: Well, this has certainly been a most enjoyable and informative afternoon. I'm sorry to say, however, that our time is up. This is your host, Dick Cavetty, and my guest, Dr. Eatwell, saying — eat well, and stay well.

Characters:

Laura Riley — *a young expectant mother*
Hunter Riley — *Laura's husband*
Ned Riley — *Hunter's brother*
Nancy Riley — *Ned's wife*
Andy, Ned, Jr. and Zach Riley — *Ned and Nancy's three sons*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

What's Cookin'?

Laura Riley is preparing Sunday dinner for her husband, Hunter, and his brother Ned's family. Laura has planned a meal that is both nutritious and delicious. She is a bit nervous because Ned's family has pretty much limited their diet to meat, potatoes and sweets. Hunter makes a bet with Laura that Ned's children won't eat any of her vegetables. In defense of Laura, Hunter makes another bet with Ned that Ned will eat the vegetables.

At dinner, Ned's children try Laura's vegetables. They find that they like them the new way she's served them. Laura has won her bet with Hunter. Ned thinks he's also won his bet — until he helps himself to a second piece of Laura's gingerbread. Laura comments that he probably finds it so moist and tasty because it contains carrots and squash. Ned, too, has lost out to good nutrition.

DO YOU THINK THAT THIS EXPERIENCE WITH GOOD NUTRITION WILL CHANGE NED'S EATING HABITS? HIS CHILDREN'S? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Documentary:

Two sets of parents talk about how they try to develop good nutrition habits in their children by:

- serving a variety of foods
- never using food as a reward or punishment
- making mealtime a pleasant experience
- letting children help prepare foods.

What kinds of nutrition habits are the children of these parents developing?

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

What different attitudes toward food are seen in the film?

- How does Laura view food? Hunter? Ned? Nancy? Their children?
- Where do students think each of these persons acquired his or her attitudes toward food?
- Do students think there is anything wrong with the eating habits of Ned and his boys? If so, what?
- Why was Ned so dead set against eating anything that was good for him?

Comments: Laura regards food as a way to keep herself, her husband, and her growing baby strong and healthy. She goes out of her way to inform herself about nutrition, and to collect interesting ideas for snacks and meals. Hunter has adopted her habits. To Ned, on the other hand, eating is a way to indulge his tastes and appetites. His children, unfortunately, have adopted their father's habits and preferences.

How does using food as a reward work out in the film?

- Why wasn't Nancy's idea about using candy as a reward successful?
- Why did Laura refuse to reward the boys for helping her prepare the meal?
- Is using food as a reward ever a good idea?

Comments: The Riley children have learned how to use food to manipulate their parents and other adults. Using food as a reward — or the lack of it as a punishment — is never a good idea.

Did anyone in the Riley family learn anything as a result of Laura's meal?

- Did the children learn anything about good nutrition?
- Would they have been willing to try Laura's vegetables if they hadn't mistaken Ned's smug smile for a smile of satisfaction?
- Are they likely to change their habits if Ned doesn't change his? What will their adult eating habits be like if they don't change now?
- How about Ned? Did Laura's trick work? Or is Ned more likely to refuse nutritious foods, even if they taste good, because he felt he was duped?
- Does age affect the ability to change eating habits?

Comments: Students may differ in their opinions about whether or not Ned can still be converted to good eating habits. It is clear, though, that it is not too late for his children to change their habits. The example and influence of Ned and Nancy will play a key role in determining whether or not this happens. If the children's habits are not changed now, while they are young, they will probably grow up to be adults with the same poor eating habits as Ned.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Following Dr. Eatwell's interview with Dick Cavetty, members of the home viewing audience were given a chance to call in and ask questions. Here are two questions that were asked. How do you think Dr. Eatwell answered them?

Good afternoon, Dr. Eatwell. My name is Mary Smith, and I have two young children — a 3-year-old and a 5-year-old. The 5-year-old has never given me any trouble about eating. She's got a good appetite and will try anything. My 3-year-old, though, eats like a bird. He doesn't eat much, and he's very fussy about what he eats. He refuses to eat eggs or peas at all, for example. What should I do?

?

Hi, Dr. Eatwell. It's nice to talk to you. I hope you can help me resolve a disagreement between my wife and me. My wife says we shouldn't feed our kids sweets. She thinks it's bad for them. I say that eating cake and candy is a part of being a kid, and that sweets won't hurt them when they're still young. Besides, I've found that promising kids candy is a good way to get them to do things they don't want to do. What do you think?

?

activity #2
A TASTEFUL EXPERIENCE

Think of the tasks involved in selecting, preparing, and serving meals — for example, washing vegetables, measuring liquids, and rolling dough:

List at least five ways young children could help out in the kitchen.

Young children can help out in the kitchen in a surprising number of ways. Depending on their age, they can:

- Cut and slice with saw-toothed knives
- Chop, grind and grate
- Crack nuts and break open eggs
- Pop corn and roll dough
- Beat, stir, and mash
- Wash and peel fruit and vegetables
- Squeeze and strain
- Measure and pour
- Help shop and plan menus

What could these tasks teach them about foods and nutrition?

What other things might children learn while doing these tasks — for example, about math or language?

Through these activities they can learn:

- Where foods come from and why they are good for us
- Motor skills
- Eye/hand coordination
- New words and names
- About numbers and time
- Why safety is important
- How to follow directions

activity #3
YOU GRADE THE PAPER

Dr. Eatwell just gave a Nutrition I.Q. test to one of the classes he teaches. Here's how one student responded. Grade his paper by putting an "X" next to incorrect answers, and indicating the total score at the top of the page.

Martie Blume
Name

Score

		True	False
1.	Raw cauliflower is a good source of Vitamin C.		✓
2.	Growing children can never get too many vitamins.	✓	
3.	Vitamin A helps our blood clot.	✓	
4.	Vegetarian diets are unsafe because you have to eat meat to get protein.		✓
5.	All children need to eat the same amount of food.		✓
6.	There are two "wonder foods" that supply all the nutrients we need: liver and milk.	✓	
7.	If children get tired of toast and eggs for breakfast, a milkshake made with milk and a banana will supply the protein and carbohydrates they need.		✓
8.	It's a good idea to cut out all fats from children's diets.		✓
9.	There are some foods that children simply have to learn to eat, because they are the only source of certain nutrients.	✓	
10.	An "empty calorie" food is one that has no calories.		✓

Martie has answered the following questions *incorrectly:* #1, 2, 3, 6, 7, and 9. His total score is 40.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe children in a nursery school or day care center eating their snack for lunch. Take notes on what the children are fed and what they eat from what is served:

   Are they served a variety of nutritious foods?
   Do they seem to like them? Report to the class on your findings.

2. Invite a dietitian or nutritionist to talk to your class about the nutritional needs of young children and some of the ways these needs can be met.
3. Arrange a visit to the kitchen of your school cafeteria, a hospital, or another institution. Talk to the people there about how they serve interesting and varied but balanced meals. Schools that serve lunch must serve what is called the Type A lunch, a nutritionally balanced meal. How do they do this and still compete with fast food places?
4. Spend one Saturday morning watching children's programs on TV. Keep a record of how many commercials there are, and what each commercial is trying to sell to children:

   How many of these commercials were for "empty calorie" foods?
   What techniques were used to make these foods attractive to children?
   How, as a parent, would you cope with these messages? Write up your findings.

5. Write and perform your own television commercials for foods that would appeal to children on the grounds of nutrition rather than sweetness, flavor, or what everyone else is eating.
6. Keep a diet diary for one week. Record everything you eat — both at meals and in-between.

   How regularly did you get the nine nutrients listed in the chart on page 8?
   How often did you eat "empty calorie" foods?

Also, try preparing raw vegetables or fruits for a snack for your own class, using unusual vegetables such as turnips, rutabaga, broccoli, kohlrabi, and mushrooms.

7. Put together a cookbook for parents and children. Find some of the books about nutrition and cooking that have been written for children and parents. Look for recipes for foods that are easy and nutritious, but unusual and interesting. Include some recipes that young children can follow. Select your favorites, and combine them with your own illustrations in book form.

to discuss

1. Think about your own food likes and dislikes:

   How many of these do you think you learned from your parents? For example, do you dislike some of the same things your parents dislike? Do you eat the same things they do for breakfast?
   What does this tell you about how your eating habits will influence your own children?

2. Would you like to change your own eating habits?

   How?
   Have you ever tried?
   Was it easy or difficult?
   Why do you think this is so?

3. Where would you go for up-to-date information on nutrition? How would you use this information to make decisions about what and what not to feed your children?

Most communities have an office of the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture. The department of home economics or human ecology at a nearby community college or university and the health department are other resources.

4 Malnutrition, obesity, tooth decay, hypertension, diabetes and heart disease are just a few of the many diet related health problems in our society. Why do you think these problems exist?

to research

1. The cost of good nutrition. Is it possible to feed a family nutritious and well balanced meals on a low budget? How?
2. Food additives. For what different reasons are they added to foods? Are some additives better than others?

Up-to-date information on the effects of additives may be obtained from consumer protection agencies, the Food and Drug Administration, and other consumer groups. Check your local library.

3. Find some children's books about food. How could you use these to teach children about food?
4. Foods in other countries. How do people in different cultures use the foods available to them to get the nutrients they need?

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . our basic nutritional needs

Food is More Than Just Something to Eat. U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health, Education and Welfare. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (booklet)

Nutrition Education for Young Children. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (booklet)

. . . cooking for and with children

Cooking Adventures for Kids. Sharon Cadwallader. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1974. (paperback)

Cooking and Eating with Children — A Way to Learn. Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1974. (booklet)

Creative Food Experiences for Children. Mary T. Goodwin and Gerry Pollin. Washington, D.C.: Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1974. (paperback)

Feed Me! I'm Yours. Vicki Lansky et al. New York: Bantam Books, 1974. (paperback)

Help! My Child Won't Eat Right. Antoinette Hatfield and Peggy Stanton. Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books, 1974. (paperback)

You can also call your local Health Department or the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture in your county for pamphlets and recipes.

PLAY AND FANTASY: THE CHILD'S BUILDING BLOCKS

True Blue

TO BEGIN...

We all need play. Children couldn't live without it. It's their way of sorting out their lives and building up their skills. Grown-ups, too, would miss a lot if they stopped playing. For play is a way people dream and imagine, explore, experiment, invent — and have fun.

You might begin this unit by having students talk about what play means to them and how they benefit from it.

FROM THE EDITORS

Play, it has been said, is the child's work. To a child, play is as vital as breakfast in the morning. To a youngster, a day without play is no day at all.

In this booklet you will learn why children put so much energy into play. You will learn what play means to them, and what they learn from it. You will also learn what parents can do to encourage and support their children's play, and how parents, too, can benefit from this important aspect of growth.

THE BIG IDEAS

- For children, play is a necessity as well as a delight.
- Through play children learn about themselves, other people, and the physical world.
- Parents enrich their children's play by playing with them and providing new experiences, play materials, and playmates.
- Watching and joining in their children's play helps parents enjoy and understand their children better.

Block City
What are you able to build with your blocks?
Castles and palaces, temples and docks.
Rain may keep raining, and others go roam,
But I can be happy and building at home.

Let the sofa be mountains, the carpet be sea,
There I'll establish a city for me . . .

— *Robert Lewis Stevenson*

IN DEFENSE OF PLAY

Children have played throughout the ages, and they continue to play today. Many adults don't understand children's play, and some even consider it a waste of time.

Let's pretend that Play is brought to trial in one of the highest courts in our land. Here is a transcript of that trial, including a newspaper reporting of the court's landmark decision.

The Prosecutor represents all those unhappy adults who have forgotten how to play. The Defense speaks on behalf of all children, as well as all adults who remember what it was like to be a child at play.

Morning Session

IN WHICH THE COURT DECIDES ON A DEFINITION OF PLAY

JUDGE: Of what do you accuse these children?

PROSECUTOR: Of play.

JUDGE: Play is such a general word. It means different things to different people. Please give the court a definition.

Have students list all the different meanings that adults might have for play.

PROSECUTOR: Play is the opposite of work. Work is useful and serious. But play is just a luxury, an escape from challenge and worry. It's relaxing and doing what you want to do.

DEFENSE: I object. The Prosecutor gives only an adult point of view. Play has a different meaning for adults than for children.

Most adults in this country are so caught up in the work ethic that they feel that play is a frill, but to children, play is a necessity and a challenge.

Children put every ounce of energy and concentration into play. Play is their way of learning about themselves, other people, and their entire physical world. What could be a more important task for young children?

JUDGE: Let the Prosecutor resume. Please state the facts of the situation as you see them.

PROSECUTOR: I've seen babies put spools in cans and take them out again, endlessly absorbed in this useless process. . . .

DEFENSE: (aside) That's how babies practice their eye-hand coordination and learn about sizes.

PROSECUTOR: I've seen toddlers removing pots and pans from the cupboard, stacking them in different ways. They were creating a mess and were totally delighted with it.

JUDGE: You've stated that children enjoy play. They repeat the same actions over and over again. They explore household articles. What else?

PROSECUTOR: I've seen preschoolers arranging all the kitchen chairs in a line. They were making high pitched sounds, holding a paper towel tube and making "shshshsh" noises with it. . . .

DEFENSE: (aside) That was a brilliant way of making a fire engine and imitating the firemen using a firehose.

PROSECUTOR: I've even come upon a child talking to the thin air as if he were talking to his best friend.

DEFENSE: (to his associate, with disgust) That was probably the child's imaginary playmate. Doesn't he know that fantasy is an important part of play?

In *Childhood and Adolescence,* L. Joseph Stone and Joseph Church say that imaginary companions appear most often around the age of 4 or 5 and seem to vanish by age 10. These imaginary companions are as vivid and solid as real people to a child. They need not serve any particular purpose or be the result of any particular problem. "They simply appear on the scene, do what they do, and depart — sometimes fading away, sometimes dying a melodramatic death in a car crash or at the hands of pirates."

PROSECUTOR: I've also seen a 4-year-old arguing endlessly with another about who would be the mother in their housekeeping game.

DEFENSE: (forgetting himself) That's play all right!

JUDGE: (to Defense) Since you agree with the definition, are you ready to proceed with your defense?

DEFENSE: Yes.

Afternoon Session

IN WHICH THE COURT DISCUSSES THE VALUE OF PLAY

DEFENSE: I would like to question the prosecutor.

PROSECUTOR: This is unorthodox!

JUDGE: You may proceed.

DEFENSE: Mr. Prosecutor, do you value the ability to set problems, analyze them, and come up with alternative solutions?

PROSECUTOR: Why, yes.

DEFENSE: Then you can't object when children set their own problems. Those toddlers using the pots and pans were creating their own spatial problems — how one container fits inside another. Naturally curious, they set harder and harder problems — problems that help them understand the properties of the physical world. They develop thinking skills through this play:

> Play strengthens children's intellectual development.

Spatial Learning in the Preschool Years is a 22 min., 16 m.m. film that can be rented or purchased by writing to: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 600 North River St., Ypsilanti, Mi. 48197.

PROSECUTOR: Humph!

DEFENSE: Mr. Prosecutor, you scoff at babies shaking rattles, toddlers dropping spools into cans and then removing them, and preschoolers moving chairs. These are small and large motor tasks that children have set for themselves:

> Through play children develop physical coordination.

Mr. Prosecutor, do you value the ability to concentrate and stick with a task?

PROSECUTOR: Of course I do.

DEFENSE: Then you can understand why those preschoolers hardly seem to hear you when they are playing with chairs and paper towel tubes — intensely recreating an entire fire fighting scene:

> Learning how to concentrate in play helps
> children form healthy study and work habits.

Mr. Prosecutor, do you value the ability to get along with people?

PROSECUTOR: Certainly. Everyone does.

DEFENSE: Then how could you object to two girls arguing about who will play the mother? By playing with others, children learn the give and take of relationships. Learning how to share toys and roles, learning how to plan together — all these are outgrowths of play:

Play strengthens children's social development.

Mr. Prosecutor, have you also seen a preschooler scolding her doll: "You're going to get a spanking for messing with those pots and pans?"

PROSECUTOR: (surprised) I forgot to mention that . . .

DEFENSE: Young children are just learning to accept rules and restrictions: "Don't wet your pants." "Don't touch Mommy's lipstick." "Don't get your party dress dirty." It's often difficult for a child to accept and follow these rules.

But play and fantasy let children experience control and power. When they're playing, children are boss. Play and fantasy help them work through their emotions. In play children can act out their anger. A child can spank her doll and yell at it without fear of punishment:

Play helps children regain emotional stability.

Finally, Mr. Prosecutor, have you really watched children play? How could you miss the joy, spontaneity, and enthusiasm children express when they play:

Through play children gain the feeling that the world
is an enjoyable place to live in.

Mr. Prosecutor, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" are inalienable rights in this country.

(to Judge): Your honor, I submit that play not only be permitted, but encouraged and supported by parents.

Morning Session (Next Day)

IN WHICH PARENTS TESTIFY AS TO HOW THEY ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN'S PLAY

DEFENSE: When we think of play, we don't usually think about parents. We forget that it's parents who create a playful — or unplayful — atmosphere in the home. To testify to this fact, I wish to call Mr. Bruce Simonetti, a model father, to the stand.

PROSECUTOR: (blustering) What? Parents getting involved in play? Well, I *never* . . .

JUDGE: Please proceed.

DEFENSE: Mr. Simonetti, please tell the court what you do to support your children's play.

Involve the class in making a chart (like the one below) that shows the growth in children's play.

MR. SIMONETTI: Well, what I do is really easy:

I play games with my children from the time they are babies.

I enjoy this. And my children thrive on it! There's no end to the games we invent. All I do is take cues from my children.

For example, with our baby Kathy, I watch to see what she enjoys. This could be dancing, or making sounds for me to copy, or playing peek-a-boo. Like most babies she practices simple actions, such as shaking her rattle over and over again.

My toddler Mike invents more complex play. He hides toys under a blanket, fills boxes to the brim, and pretends to be asleep — games I would never dream of.

My preschooler Ruth gets more imaginative and varied ideas. She explores objects, arranges them in order, builds and pretends with them. She transforms tricycles into racing cars and jungle gyms into rocket ships.

What Children Do

Babies	Toddlers	Preschoolers
• shake rattles	• fill and empty containers	• pretend to be Mommy
• play peek-a-boo	• pull toys	• play with cars — make engine noises
• bang objects	• carry toys	• build "houses"
• bounce up and down		

Characteristics of Play

Babies	Toddlers	Preschoolers
highly repetitive	repetitive	less repetitive
learn single actions	distractable	planning begins
use few objects at a time	explore objects in more ways than before	use objects to stand for other real objects
don't pretend	better at imitating what others do	more complex pretending

PROSECUTOR: (aside) Playing games with his children. How unmanly. How undignified. His children won't respect him . . .

MR. SIMONETTI: My children are delighted when I get down on the floor and play with them. They feel important when they learn that grownups respect their ideas and that grownups care.

DEFENSE: Thank you Mr. Simonetti. You may step down.

Would Ms. Carla Dukes, "Mother of the Year," now please come to the stand and describe how she plays with her children.

MS. DUKES: I've discovered a number of ways in which parents can become involved in their children's play. First of all:

Parents can add fantasy and playfulness to everyday situations.

This makes everyday routines more relaxed and enjoyable. "Flying your helicopter upstairs to bed" is much more fun than walking.

Another important aid to children's play is this:

Parents should provide things for their children to play with.

You know, children find a way to play with anything they see — toys, furniture, pots and pans, and their own and their parents' belongings. Parents have to find things that are safe and acceptable for their children to use. I provide household objects, such as empty boxes, clothes pins, and old clothes, for my children to play with.

Whatever toy is bought or made for a very young child, it should be checked for the following:

1. *The child should be able to grasp it from any angle.*
2. *It should be easily manageable with one hand.*
3. *Edges should be rounded and smooth.*
4. *There should be no detachable parts.*
5. *There should be no harmful coloring matter.*
6. *It should be boilable.*
7. *It should be able to take hard use.*

The Complete Book of Children's Play. Ruth E. Hartley and Robert Goddeson.

Of course, I buy some toys for my children. When people ask me which toys are best suited to their children's age and abilities, I tell them just to watch each child play. What does their child like to do: chew, shake, hit, bang, push, pull, put things inside of other things, fit things together, take them apart, make models of things, pretend?

Once parents know their children's interests and abilities, they can make or buy toys that help children pursue these interests and practice skills. For example, a string tied around an old stuffed animal transforms an ignored plaything into an exciting pull toy for the toddler who is beginning to push and pull things about.

[illegible]n people ask me what kinds of toys to buy, I tell them to balance toys that do only one thing with toys that can be used in many ways. Most puzzles just fit together and that's all. Blocks, on the other hand, can be used to build, line up, bang together, or sort by shape.

PROSECUTOR:
(to himself) Will this windbag never run out of air?

MS. DUKES: Well, I guess that's about it.

DEFENSE: Thank you, Ms. Dukes. You've been most eloquent.

My last witness is a nursery school teacher. Ms. Tina Holmes, would you please take the stand and give us your testimony.

MS. HOLMES: I'd be glad to. I firmly believe that:

Parents should provide playmates for their children.

Children learn new things from each other. For example, one morning my son Felix made a castle. His friends Mark and Jeff had never heard of a castle. They watched Felix make a tall building with decorative triangles and wedges.

Later Mark and Jeff tried to recreate Felix's castle and ended up with a totally different building. As they experimented, they learned new principles in block building. Playing together also deepened their friendship and improved their social skills.

The only other point I want to make is that:

The more children experience, the richer their play becomes.

Parents can broaden their children's experience by taking them to see people, places, and things outside the home.

The best trips are active. For example, children need to climb on a fire engine, get in the driver's seat, and listen to the siren. Afterwards, parents can supply children with a few props, such as old galoshes and a worn hose, to recreate their experiences.

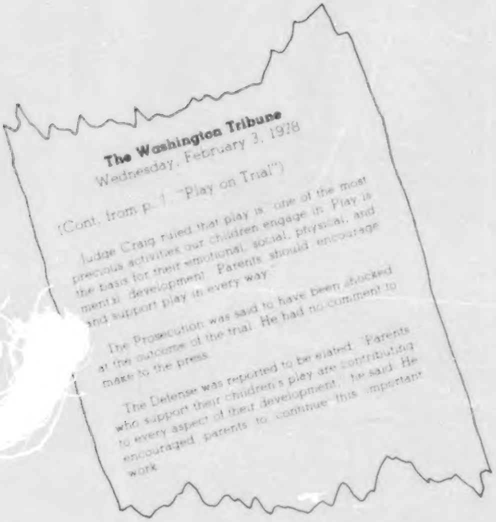
DEFENSE: Thank you, Ms. Holmes. Very helpful testimony.

Lastly, I wish the court to consider this:

Playing with children has tremendous benefits for parents.

Through play parents become more aware of their children's interests, concerns, and developing skills. Play also brings parents closer to their children.

JUDGE: The Court is adjourned until tomorrow morning. I will announce my ruling at that time.



The Washington Tribune

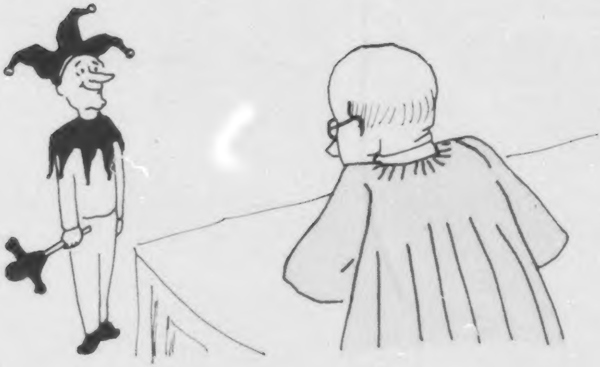
Wednesday, February 3, 1978

(Cont. from p. 1, "Play on Trial")

Judge Craig ruled that play is "one of the most precious activities our children engage in. Play is the basis for their emotional, social, physical, and mental development. Parents should encourage and support play in every way."

The Prosecution was said to have been shocked at the outcome of the trial. He had no comment to make to the press.

The Defense was reported to be elated. "Parents who support their children's play are contributing to every aspect of their development," he said. He encouraged parents to continue this important work.



Characters:

Jeannie Sandburg — *a young mother*
Amos Sandburg — *Jeannie's husband*
Allison Sandburg — *5-year-old daughter of Jeannie and Amos*
Christopher Sandburg — *Allison's 2½-year-old brother*
Amy and Jennifer — *two 9-year-old neighbors*
Grandpa — *Jeannie's father*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

True Blue

Allison Sandburg has an imaginary playmate named Big Blue. Allison talks to Big Blue, plays with him, and builds him a house. She even brings him to lunch. Allison's father, Amos, enjoys Big Blue, but Jeannie, Allison's mother, is upset by Big Blue. Finally, after Allison has an unsuccessful experience jumping rope with two older girls, Jeannie decides Allison is becoming too involved with Big Blue. She says he must stay in Allison's room.

Because Jeannie won't let Big Blue go to the zoo the next day, Allison doesn't want to go either and hides. Amos finds her and persuades her to come, but Allison is very sad. At the zoo Jeannie discusses the situation with Grandpa. He reminds Jeannie that as a young child she had a doll that was very important to her. Jeannie finally understands why Big Blue means so much to Allison. She admits her mistake to Allison, and — happily — the two of them go off to find Big Blue.

WHY DOES BIG BLUE MEAN SO MUCH TO ALLISON?

Documentary:

Children give their ideas about what play means to them. Parents tell why they think that it's important for their children to play, what children learn from play, and how play can be facilitated.

Have students discuss what they think the children shown in the documentary are learning from their play.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

Why is Jeannie upset about Big Blue?

- From Jeannie's point of view, how does Big Blue hurt Allison?
- How does Jeannie discourage Allison's fantasy? How does this affect Allison and their relationship?
- Does Jeannie participate in other play? Why is it easier to accept lotto or similar play?
- Is Jeannie's reaction typical? If your child had an imaginary playmate, how would you feel? What would you do?

Comments: It is not uncommon for parents, like Jeannie, to worry when their children create imaginary playmates. Some of the possible reasons for Jeannie's reaction to Big Blue might be:

- Jeannie is not comfortable with play and is unsure how to respond.
- Jeannie fears that fantasy will make Allison withdraw from contact with real people and situations.
- Jeannie relates to play that develops children's intellectual growth, e.g., lotto.

How do Amos' reactions differ from Jeannie's?

- What does Amos do when Allison appears with Big Blue?
- Why does he react so differently from Jeannie?
- In what other forms of play does Amos participate?
- How does his play with Allison and Christopher affect his relationship with them? How do they all benefit?

Comments: Amos does not worry about why Allison invents Big Blue. He tries to find out what Big Blue looks like and likes to eat. He wants to enjoy Big Blue as long as he lasts.

Amos initiates play. He adds an element of play and fantasy to routines and pretends to be a monkey at the zoo. However, we don't see him play lotto, the kind of play Jeannie relates to.

Amos and his children are close. They have fun with him and confide totally in him, as Allison did in the shed. For his part, Amos enjoys himself when he plays.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
MAKING A PLACE FOR PLAY

By using fantasy or play, parents can make daily routines more enjoyable, relaxed, and interesting for themselves and their children.

Think of at least two ways parents can add fantasy or playfulness to each of the following everyday situations:

For example, have children pretend to buckle up the seat belts in their private airplane.

- **Getting dressed**
- **Making beds**
- **Coming down to breakfast**
- **Washing up and brushing teeth**
- **Fastening seat belts**
- **Picking up toys**
- **Getting ready for bed**
- **Taking a car or bus trip**

activity #2
MAKING A PLAY FOR PLAY

You are a nursery school teacher. At a parent conference, one parent wants to know why children are playing all day instead of learning at school.

What would you say to this parent? **?**

What aspects of play could you point out to help her understand that learning does take place during play? **?**

activity #3
CUE CARDS

By following children's cues, parents can find many opportunities to play and learn with their children.

In each of the following situations, comment on:

- how the child is benefiting from play
- how the parent can join in.

Carrie Ellis notices that her baby, Jennie, loves to bounce up and down.

When Sam Harvey gives a toy to his baby Jason, Jason promptly throws it away and laughs.

Peg Walpole finds 2-year-old Cindy bending over and making noises into empty pots and pans.

When Sarah Stevens calls to 3-year-old Timmy, he laughs and hides under the table.

Mike Wong notices his 5-year-old son Steve pretending to give his brother a shot.

Ben and Barbara Phillips notice that their 4-year-old daughter, Marilyn, always wants to play "mother."

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe a child playing in a day care center, nursery school, Head Start center, your home or neighborhood. Watch the child for at least 30 minutes and take notes on:

   how the child uses toys and play materials
   how the child seems to be benefitting from play
   whether the child is playing alone or with others
   how the child seems to affect and be affected by other children's play
   what parents or teachers do to encourage the child's play
   what else the adults could do to enrich the child's play.

   Write up your notes and summarize what you learned from this observation.
2. Observe how a baby, a toddler, and a preschooler play with the same kind of toy or material (for example, a ball, sand, water, blocks, or a doll). Describe how their play is similar and how it differs.
3. Either working alone or with other students re-enact play you've seen children engage in. Analyze and list the skills you think children gain through this play.
4. Visit the toy department of a department store and look at the variety of toys available for children at different ages. Report to your classmates on:

   which toys can be used in different ways
   which toys you would recommend.

5. Some parents keep a special box of scrap materials and old household objects for their children to play with. Survey your own home, and consult books on children's play. Make a list of materials and objects you would put in such a play box.

to discuss

1. Try to remember how you used to play as a child:

   Did you invent games or learn them from other children and adults?
   What did you like to do best?
   What do you think you learned from your play?

Have the students play some of their childhood games in class. Ask the students what skills (social, physical, cognitive, emotional) are being developed through the games.

2. What does "play" mean to you now?

   Has your attitude toward play changed from when you were a child? How?
   Why do you think this happened?

3. How do you and other members of your family relax and play together? How do you benefit from this?

to research

1. How children play in other cultures. Pick 2 or 3 different cultures and compare the games that children play, the toys and materials they play with, and the roles and fantasies they act out.
2. Different theories about the value of play. Select from the writings of: Jean Piaget; Maria Montessori; Sara Smilansky; Susan Isaacs; Sigmund Freud; and Joan Cass.
3. How children move from playing by themselves (solitary play) to playing with other children (parallel and cooperative play).

See unit on *Social Skills.*

4. The history of toys and games in this country:

   Where did different toys and games originally come from?
   How have they changed over the years?
   Why do you think this happened?

5. Play therapy. How do psychologists use play and fantasy to help children deal with their emotional problems?

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . children's play

The Complete Book of Children's Play. Ruth E. Hartley and Robert M. Goldenson. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1963. (paperback)

Understanding Children's Play. Ruth Hartley et. al. Columbia University Press, 1952. (paperback)

Also: *Young Children in Action*. Mary Hohmann, Bernard Banet and David P. Weikart. Write to: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation,
600 North River, Ypsilanti,
Mi. 48197

. . . playing with children

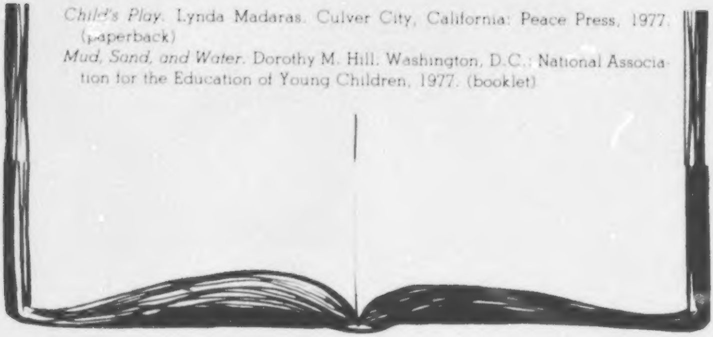
How to Play With Your Baby. Athina Aston. New York: Fountain Publishing Company, 1971. (paperback)

How to Play With Your Children. Brian and Shirley Sutton-Smith. New York: Hawthorn Books, 1974. (paperback)

. . . materials and opportunities that encourage children's play

Beautiful Junk. Dianne Warner and Jeanne Quill. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (booklet)

The Block Book. Elizabeth S. Hirsch, ed. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1974. (paperback)



Child's Play. Lynda Madaras. Culver City, California: Peace Press, 1977. (paperback)

Mud, Sand, and Water. Dorothy M. Hill. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1977. (booklet)

LOVING CHILDREN: GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

I Love You When You're Good

TO BEGIN...

What children learn about themselves is probably more important than anything else they learn. One of the most significant things children learn about themselves is how lovable they are.

Children who feel that they are loved are able to reach out to others and to make the most of their abilities. They thrive.

You might set the stage for this unit by asking students to talk about how they feel when they know they're loved. Ask them if they see any relationship between feeling loved and feeling secure.

FROM THE EDITORS

All parents want their children to like and respect themselves. This feeling of self-worth is essential for children to become all they could be. It gives them the security they need to lead full lives and to love and respect others.

This booklet talks about how parents influence the development of self-worth and security in children. You will learn that even when their parents love them, children may be getting a different message. You will see that there are special things parents can do to help their children feel loved.

THE BIG IDEAS

- A sense of self-worth helps children lead productive lives and form rewarding relationships with others.
- Children feel secure about themselves when they are valued and accepted for what they are.
- It is largely through the quality of the relationship with their parents that children build a sense of worth.

"I love you,"
said a great mother.
"I love you for what you are
knowing so well what you are. . ."

— From "Mother and Child"
Carl Sandburg
Wind Song
(New York: Harcourt
Brace Jovarovich, 1960

A VALUABLE MESSAGE

Have you ever had one of those days when you just wanted to crawl under the sheets and never come out? When everything went wrong and you thought no one appreciated you?

We all have such days. Fortunately, there are also days when we love the world and the world loves us. On these days everything goes right and everyone seems to understand.

Ask students if they've ever had such days. What made them good or bad? How did their feelings about themselves on such days affect how they behaved?

Depending on the day, then, our feelings about ourselves go up and down a notch or two. But in general, we all have a basic sense of self worth. This is called our **SELF-ESTEEM**.

Few things are more important in determining what we become than our self-esteem. Our feelings about our worth are the very core of our being. They determine how **SECURE** we feel. They affect not only our mental health, but also:

what friends we choose and how well we get along with them,
how productive we are in school and on the job, and
how satisfied we are with ourselves and others.

It's easy to pick out children who don't feel good about themselves from those who do. Children with low self-esteem act very differently from those with a strong sense of worth. Some withdraw from other people and experiences:

> *Ellen is very shy. She doesn't think people like her, so she stays away from other children on the playground. Ellen is afraid to try new things. She's scared that people will like her even less if she does something wrong. Failure hurts her much more deeply than it does other children.*

Other children who feel insecure defend themselves against this feeling in a more aggressive way:

> *Craig spends a lot of time trying to convince himself and others of his worth. He is mean to other children because he thinks people care about them more than him. He teases them about their mistakes to make himself seem more important. He tries to call attention to himself by being loud and bossy. He tries to convince himself and others of his worth by bragging and bullying.*

Children who feel good about themselves, on the other hand, are free to be themselves:

> *Joanna is open and alive. She doesn't have to waste time proving her worth — she knows she is lovable. Instead, she uses her energies on more rewarding tasks — such as making friends and playing peacefully with them. Joanna isn't afraid to try out her wings. She has learned that even if she fails, people will still like and respect her. Because she has had so many good experiences with people, she expects to get along with others. And so she does.*

Ask students if they know any children like Ellen, Craig, or Joanna. What do they think these 3 children will be like as teenagers? As adults?

Whether children develop a sense of worth that is low, like Ellen and Craig, or high, like Joanna, depends on many things. One of the most important is whether or not they have felt valued and cared for by other people:

> Children value themselves to the degree they feel valued by others.

In their young years, children learn about their worth mainly from their parents. It is up to parents to get across to children the message that they are valued and accepted.

And every significant person in a child's life — grandfather, aunt, Sunday school teacher, babysitter, nursery school teacher, etc. — teaches a child something about his or her self-worth.

CROSSED WIRES

> The supreme happiness in life is the knowledge that we are loved.
>
> — *Victor Hugo*

Most parents love their children.

But not all children feel loved.

Even when their parents love them, some children think they're just a bother. Others learn that their parents care about them only when they behave in certain ways.

Not all children are lucky enough to know that whatever they say or do, their parents care.

Clearly, then *being* loved is not the same as *feeling* loved. It's not enough for parents to love their children. They have to be sure their children know that, too. It's the child's feeling about being loved that will affect his or her future development:

> Children feel valued when their parents' love is UNCONDITIONAL — when it has no strings attached.

Security is knowing you're loved.

Parents need to express their love to children in ways that children understand. Parents may scrimp and save to buy a bigger and better home for their children. But children don't see such an act as a reflection of their parents' love.

Instead, simple, everyday things tell children whether or not their parents value them. A shared experience, a warm smile, a gentle touch and a kind word spell "I love you" to a child.

Or as James L. Hymes, Jr., said in *A Child Development Point of View:*

> "Babies don't get love through long distance telephone calls or by having the word spelled out in a telegram. The sure adult, the pillar, is Love. The child can feel it, press it close, bury himself it it when thunder is loud or when the ear hurts or when the television show is too frightening."

In the same way, day-to-day happenings can tell children they're not valued very highly. Unintentionally, parents' words and actions can say to children that their parents don't care.

Children start getting messages about their worth from the first moment of life. Even young babies, through the way their parents handle them, can learn either: "I am worth a lot of tender loving care" or "I'm just in the way." Repeated daily experiences at home and outside either change or deepen these feelings.

Let's compare how two parents interact with their children to see how the things they say and do might look from a child's point of view.

Have students talk about what the children might have been learning about themselves in each of these instances.

Parent #1

It's time for Mrs. McDonald to feed 6-month-old Douggie. She hopes it won't take as long as usual. She can't wait for the day when Douggie can feed himself. Because Douggie eats so slowly, Mrs. McDonald usually tries to do something else while she's feeding him. She holds a book on her lap and reads, for example, or makes phone calls. She doesn't notice Douggie's coos of satisfaction. She only responds when he cries or chokes on his food.

Barbie has just managed to tie her shoelaces by herself for the first time, and she calls to her mother to watch. "Good girl," say Mrs. McDonald. "That's the kind of little girl Daddy and I like." Mrs. McDonald thinks she has come upon the secret of bringing up children. When her children are good, she rewards them with her love. When they are bad, she takes it away.

Barbie just knocked over her mother's plants as she was climbing up to look out of the window. "You naughty girl," says Mrs. McDonald. "How could you be so clumsy?" Mrs. McDonald is frowning, and the tone of her voice is very angry. She sends Barbie up to her room. Barbie realizes with a sinking feeling that she's done it again. She wishes that she weren't such a bad girl. Now her mother will barely speak to her for the rest of the day.

Parent #2

Betty Sue's cry tells Mr. Washington that it's time to change her diaper. Mr. Washington has come to look forward to these opportunities to be close to his baby and make her more comfortable. He never rushes through these rituals. He takes his time, stopping to play with Betty Sue's toes and tickle her under the chin. He talks and sings. When she gurgles, he gurgles back. Sometimes he plays peek-a-boo with her clean diaper. And usually he just can't resist giving her a big, fat kiss.

When Mr. Washington's 3-year-old son helps him clear the table after dinner, Mr. Washington gives him a special hug. "I really appreciate your help," he says. "Work gets done a lot faster when you help." Joe warms up to his Dad's words. They are a reminder of the pride and joy his Dad always seems to feel toward him. Mr. Washington is generous with hugs and kind words. Rarely a day goes by that Joe doesn't learn how much his father loves him.

Joe just pinched Betty Sue to see what would happen, and Betty Sue is telling everyone loudly and clearly how she feels. Mr. Washington says firmly: "Joe, don't do that to your little sister. Pinching hurts." Putting his arm around Joe he says: "I love Betty Sue just like I love you, and I don't want to see either of you hurt."

If parents are always in a hurry when they take care of their children, children could learn that their parents don't think they are important. If parents express their love only under certain conditions, children may learn that they are loved — IF they obey, or IF they don't wet the bed, or IF they don't make any mistakes. If children keep hearing that they are bad, they may begin to believe it.

And, if children receive many such messages, they may begin to think that their parents aren't glad to have them.

Unfortunately, so many parents were brought up feeling these "IFs" that it's hard for them to change their ways and give love freely to their own children.

Love Letters

Let your love be like the misty rain,
coming softly, but flooding the river.
— *Proverb from Madagascar*

Children need love and affection in large doses. In fact, it's probably safe to say that children can't get too much love:

Children need to feel that their parents wouldn't trade them in for anyone else in the world.

Sometimes, though, smothering or overprotection is confused with love. In the name of love, parents do so much for children that children never learn to do things for themselves. (See the unit on *Parenting Styles.*) You can do too much for your children, but you can't love them too much.

To show their love and get their children's self-esteem off to a good start, parents can:

FIND THE TIME TO GIVE CHILDREN SPECIAL ATTENTION

Parents lead busy lives. It's all too easy for children's needs to get lost in the midst of shopping lists, dentist appointments, and the weekly wash. That's why it's important for parents to find or make time when they can focus just on their children — when they can talk to their children, listen to them, and show interest in their activities. This may mean putting down the iron or paint brush to take a close look at the caterpillar Johnny just found. Or, it could mean scheduling a walk with Sally at the end of the day just to talk.

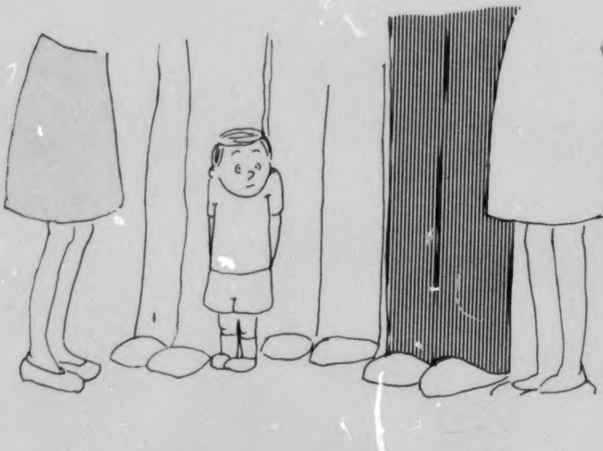
EXPRESS AFFECTION OFTEN THROUGH PHYSICAL CONTACT

Physical affection is a basic human need. It's also one of the languages children understand best. Babies thrive on cuddles and caresses. As children get older, parents can offer hugs, kisses, an arm over the shoulder, or a pat on the back. Sometimes the right words are hard to find, but a gentle hug says it all.

TREAT CHILDREN WITH THE SAME RESPECT AS ADULTS

Too often we take children for granted. We have two sets of manners, one for adults, and another for children. We embarrass children by scolding or criticizing them in front of others. We get so involved in a conversation we forget to include children. We make them wait for us longer than we would make an adult wait. Children are no less sensitive than adults. They deserve equal respect.

Have students talk about how children are ignored by sales people or supermarket clerks. It's not unusual to see a child with money in hand waiting patiently for the clerk's attention as adults go by.



TELL CHILDREN FROM TIME TO TIME THEY'RE LOVED

Parents should never assume their children know they're loved and appreciated. Children need to be told these things — again and again. It's also important not to wait until children get good grades or do something well to express these feelings. A spontaneous "It's sure nice to have you around" can give children's self-esteem a healthy boost.

RESPOND TO CHILDREN'S MISBEHAVIORS WITH PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING

When children spill their milk for the third time in a row, or hit their best friend over the head with a toy shovel, it's easy to treat them like criminals. Instead, though, parents should try to see children for what they are: young human beings who need help from grown-ups in controlling their bodies and emotions.

This theme is further developed in the unit on *Growing Up*.

RESPECT CHILDREN'S FEELINGS AND ABILITIES

Because of their small size, we sometimes forget that children are people too. They have a right to privacy, to ownership, and to feelings of their own. We may have to remind ourselves not to carry children when they can get there on their own steam, not to push and pull children when *we* are in a hurry. We may have to stop ourselves from speaking for children when they can do this for themselves: "Juanita thinks your present is lovely, Carlos."

This doesn't mean that if parents ever lose their temper they've ruined their children forever. Hurrying through a feeding now and then won't cause permanent damage. Children are flexible and mend well. They don't need perfect parents. Ordinary people will do.

In the same way, though, just kissing children or saying "I love you" isn't enough to convince children that they are lovable. What counts is the overall climate in the home. If it is loving and respected, then slowly but surely, children will learn that they are valued:

just the way they are,
just because they are,
no if's, and's, or but's.

FILM REVIEW SECTION

I Love You When You're Good

Characters:

Joe Sanchez — *a father*
Maggie Sanchez — *Joe's wife*
Christina — *their 4-year-old daughter*
Tio Daniel — *Maggie's uncle*
Cindy — *Maggie's younger sister*
Lucy — *a friend of Cindy's*
Patty — *Lucy's daughter*

Lucy (a friend of Cindy's) and her daughter Patty are staying with the Sanchez family. Their visit causes Maggie and Joe Sanchez to take a closer look at their relationship with their own daughter, Christina.

Joe thinks Lucy is a secure woman and a good mother. He is impressed by Patty's good manners and obedience. He wishes Christina were more like Patty, and accuses Maggie of spoiling Christina. Maggie, on the other hand, sees Patty as a frightened child who is becoming as insecure as her mother. She thinks that showing love and approval only when a child is good is a terrible way to raise a child.

When Lucy is arrested in a drug raid, Joe sees that Maggie was right: Lucy is constantly seeking the approval of others. He comes home and reflects on what has occurred.

WHAT WAS LUCY TEACHING PATTY ABOUT HERSELF?

Documentary:

Dr. Bettye Caldwell explains that one of the most important things we can teach a child is that he or she is loved unconditionally — with "no strings attached." She tells viewers how they can communicate to their children through their actions — as well as their words — that they are valued by their parents.

Have the students discuss Dr. Caldwell's idea that the home needs to be a place of refuge for the child — a place where the child can be accepted totally.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

How is Lucy's treatment of Patty a reflection of her own feelings of self-worth?

- Does Lucy really value Patty for herself?
- In what ways is Lucy influenced by what others think of her?
- Does Lucy think that her style of parenting is an effective means of getting Patty to behave?

Comments: From Lucy's behavior, it would seem that Maggie's estimation of Lucy is correct. She is a totally insecure person who looks to others for approval and direction. Her insecurities, it would seem, make her willing to do most anything to gain favor in others' eyes. Lucy, in turn, is instilling these same insecurities in Patty. She wants Patty to be the subject of admiration; therefore, she only praises her for those behaviors which are admirable. In all probability, Lucy is oblivious to the values she is giving her child. One has every reason to believe that Lucy does indeed love her child. The unfortunate part is that Patty is growing up unaware of her mother's love.

Why does Joe initially find Lucy's parenting techniques so attractive?

- What makes Joe later change his opinion?
- What does Maggie see happening in Patty that eludes Joe?
- What happens when Joe tries to utilize some of Lucy's techniques on Christina?

Comments: Joe initially is dazzled by Lucy's parenting techniques. He views Patty as a much more polite, refined, and well-behaved child than his own Christina. To Joe, Lucy's techniques get results; he holds Lucy up as a model to Maggie. Maggie, however, sees that Patty is quickly becoming a shy, frightened child who lives only to please others. She also sees the beginnings of these behaviors in Christina when Joe tries to copy Lucy's style. Only when the drug raid dramatically points out to Joe how insecure Lucy is, does he begin to question the merit of her approach.

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ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
THE LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT

Think about the kinds of things that parents and other people do to make you feel good, and the things that make you feel bad. Write a short story about a day in the life of a small child. Include incidents that might help build the child's self-esteem, and things that could lower it. How does the child feel by the end of the day?

And you can write your own story about how you feel at the end of the day after students have failed to show you respect.

activity #2
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAY, IT'S HOW YOU SAY IT

It's not just parents' words that tell children whether or not they are valued. Body language also says a lot. Even the words "I love you" can mean "I don't love you" if they are said with impatience, sarcasm, or anger.

With your classmates, pretend you are saying each of the following things to a child.

WHERE DID YOU PICK THOSE FLOWERS?

BOY, AM I LUCKY TO HAVE YOU!

WHAT HAPPENED?

YOU LITTLE MISCHIEF-MAKER!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

Through their body language, have students try to say the very opposite of what the words themselves imply.

Repeat each statement at least 3 different ways. In each case, have your classmates observe you and describe:

the expression on your face
the tone in your voice
the position and movement of your body
your gestures.

What do these things tell people about your feelings? How might a child feel who heard and watched you say these things?

activity #3
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

In each of the situations below, describe how you think the parent's words and behavior made the child feel about his or her value. What would you have done in each situation?

Mr. Vaughn is dressing 2 year old Ricky. "Hurry up," he says. "I haven't got all day." Ricky wants to button his sweater himself, but Mr. Vaughn won't let him. "You're too slow," he says. "I don't have time to wait for you."

4 year-old Nancy's baby brother has just broken Nancy's favorite doll, and Nancy is angry and upset. Nancy's mother promises to buy her a new doll, but Nancy is still angry. "Stop your fussing," says Mrs. Barry finally. "Nobody likes an unpleasant child."

Mr. Riley has taken 3-year-old Sammy shopping with him. Sammy is having trouble keeping up with his father's pace, but refuses to be carried. Reluctantly, Mr. Riley lets Sammy walk. Then, when Sammy stops to look in a toy store window, Mr. Riley loses his patience. He takes Sammy by the arm, and starts pulling him along.

3-year-old Annie has called her mother out to the back yard to look at the castle she just built. On the way over to the sandbox Mrs. Payne's neighbor calls to her. Mrs. Payne goes over to talk to the neighbor. She talks to her for the next 15 minutes, despite Annie's calls to "come look at this."

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe children interacting with adults in a nursery school, day care center, Head Start center, your home or community:

   How do adults respond to children in ways that tell them they are valued?
   How do adults respond in ways that could make children feel unloved?
   What are the different ways adults convey their feelings to children?
   How would you have responded to the child in each situation you observed?
   How would you have felt if you were the child in each case?

   Write up your observations.
2. Talk with a child in a nursery school, day care center, Head Start center or your home or neighborhood. Ask the child what grown-ups sometimes say or do that make him or her feel good. Then ask what things make him or her feel bad. Record your conversation, and tell your classmates what you learned from it.
3. **For one whole day, keep a record of all the times you see or hear someone being put down — in school, at home, or elsewhere. In each case, discuss:**

   why you think people said and did these things
   whether or not you think they were aware of the effects of what they were saying or doing
   what the effects were.
4. Write an essay on how it feels to be loved. Or, with your classmates, make a large poster entitled: "Love is . . ."
5. Write out your feelings about yourself:

   Do you like yourself?
   Do you think other people like you?
   Do you wish you were someone else?
   If you don't feel good about yourself, what can you do about it?

to discuss

1. Does our culture tend to value people largely for what they do or what they look like? Give some examples.
2. If we give young children a strong sense of their worth, won't they become too hard to handle?

Just the opposite. It is people who have doubts about their worth who tend to behave in ways that are hard to accept and handle.

3. Set up a classroom debate on this proposition:

   It is possible to show children that you disapprove of their behaviors without implying that you also disapprove of them.
4. In what ways do schools encourage the growth of self esteem in children? In what ways do they discourage it?

to research

1. What some famous people have said about the power and art of loving. (See, for example, the writings of Erich Fromm, Gandhi, and Albert Schweitzer.)
2. The relationship between low self esteem and crime, including juvenile delinquency.
3. Prejudice and racism:

   What are the effects on young children when a whole society tells them they are not valued?
   What can parents do to combat the effects of prejudice or racism?
4. The relationship between self esteem and mental health.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . how parents affect children's self-esteem

Peoplemaking. Virginia Satir. Palo Alto, California: Science and Behavior Books, 1972. (paperback)

Your Child's Self-Esteem. Dorothy Corkille Briggs. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970. (paperback)

. . . the power and importance of love

The Art of Loving. Erich Fromm. New York: Bantam Books, 1956. (paperback)

The Roots of Love. Helene S. Arnstein. New York: Bantam Books, 1975. (paperback)

. . . the effects of prejudice on self-esteem

Black Child Care. James P. Comer, M.D. and Alvin Poussaint, M.D. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975. (paperback)

Black Rage. W. H. Grier and P. H. Cobbs. New York: Basic Books, 1968. (paperback)

Race Awareness in Young Children. Mary Ellen Goodman. New York: Macmillan, 1964. (paperback)

Towards the Elimination of Racism. Phyllis A. Katz, ed. New York: British Book Center, 1976. (paperback)

LISTENING TO CHILDREN: CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN AND HEARD

The Secret of Little Ned

TO BEGIN...

When we interact with children, we tend to respond quickly on the basis of how they affect us. This unit is designed to help students observe and listen more carefully to children. You might begin by asking students to "Tell me about a young child you know." Students' responses will probably tend to be more an interpretation of the child's behavior than a factual description of what the child is really like. Use this example to show students the purpose of this unit: to focus more clearly on what the child is actually saying.

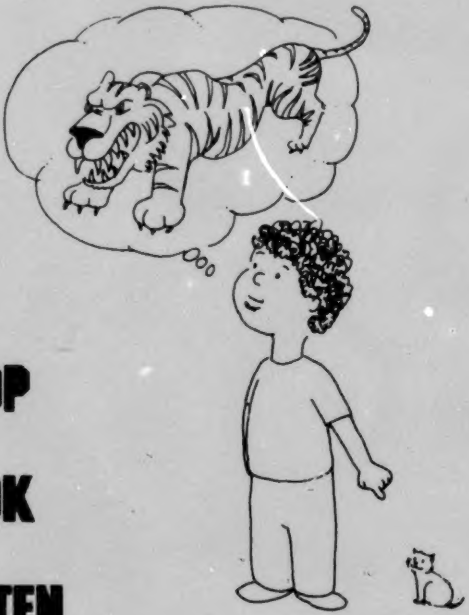
FROM THE EDITORS

There are different kinds of listening. We can listen for information, as we do in a history lecture or during the evening news. Or, we can listen "between the lines." This kind of listening takes into account the texture of words — the emotions and feelings they express, what is *not* being said as well as what *is* being said.

This is the kind of listening you will be reading about in this booklet. You will learn about the different ideas and feelings young children have to talk about, the ways in which they express their concerns, and how parents can hear and respond to what they are saying.

THE BIG IDEAS

- Listening to children is as important as talking with them.
- Children do not always express their thoughts and feelings in ways that are clear to parents.
- By paying attention to children's verbal and nonverbal messages, parents can learn more about what their children are thinking and feeling.



STOP

LOOK

LISTEN

LISTENING: *The Better to Hear You With*

"Kids. What do they have to say?"

A lot. Yet many parents think they having nothing to learn from their children. Some even assume they know just what their children are thinking and feeling all the time. And so they end up talking to children much more than they listen.

But talking is just half of the process of communication. The other half is listening. Listening is one of the best ways parents can get to know their children. Listening is a window into how children think, feel and learn. It is also one of the best ways parents can show their children they care.

In the following excerpts from an imaginary diary, a mother describes how she learned to listen to her two young children.

May 10

Dear Diary,

Today at the grocery store I overheard two women talking. One was saying: "I've given up trying to understand my son. Nothing he says or does makes one bit of sense to me."

Her friend replied: "I know what you mean. But at least your son still talks to you. My daughter hardly says a word to me . . ."

Ask students if they think this is a common situation between teenagers and their parents. How does such a situation develop?

A familiar story, I thought to myself, and moved on to the check-out counter. Then on the way to the car I passed a group of young people. "My folks don't understand me at all," one was complaining. "Yeah," sympathized another. "My dad never listens to me, and my mom . . ."

Hearing these two conversations right on top of each other got me to wondering. Cheryl is just 6 now, and Bobby only 4, and as a rule we're pretty close. But will there come a day when we, too, will stop listening and talking to each other? I certainly hope not . . .

May 12

Dear Diary,

Those two conversations I overheard last Saturday have really got me thinking about my relationship with my own kids. This morning, for example, Cheryl came storming into the house, went into her bedroom, and slammed the door. I thought I'd better find out what was wrong, so I asked her what the matter was. Our conversation went something like this:

Cheryl: "That Judy is so stupid. I hate her!"
Me: "It's not nice to hate people, dear. You should try to like everybody."
Cheryl: "Well, I don't like Judy. I hate her. Tomorrow I'm going to trip her and make her fall flat on her face."
Me: "Now, Cheryl. I know you don't mean that. You don't want to hurt your friend."
Cheryl: "Yes, I do. And she's not my friend. She's mean!"
Me: "Maybe you haven't been very nice to Judy. Did you do something to make her angry?"

Notice how the mother makes decisions and judgments about Cheryl's behavior before she even knows what's bothering Cheryl.

Cheryl: "No, she's just mean. It's all her fault."
Me: "Now, Cheryl, nothing is ever the fault of just one person. Usually both people are to blame. Why don't you invite Judy over and you can have some lemonade and be friends again."
Cheryl: "I don't wanna be friends with Judy. And I don't want her to come to my house. I hate her!"
Me: "Cheryl, I asked you not to talk like that. I think you're just cranky and tired. Now go upstairs to bed, and maybe after you have a nap you'll feel better."

Well, Cheryl didn't feel better after her nap. She was more upset than before, and I felt terrible.

What a day!

May 13

Dear Diary,

I was talking to Bonnie today, and she started telling me about the parent group she goes to on Thursday nights. One of the things they've been talking about is the need for parents to listen to their children. As parents, we talk to our kids a lot. We lecture and preach. We judge and direct. We blame and scold. But only rarely do we just . . . listen. And even when we do, it may be with only one ear.

As Bonnie was talking, something clicked inside my head. I thought back on my conversation with Cheryl yesterday. Sure enough:

I lectured.
I interpreted what she said.
I blamed her.
I gave her advice.
I ordered her.

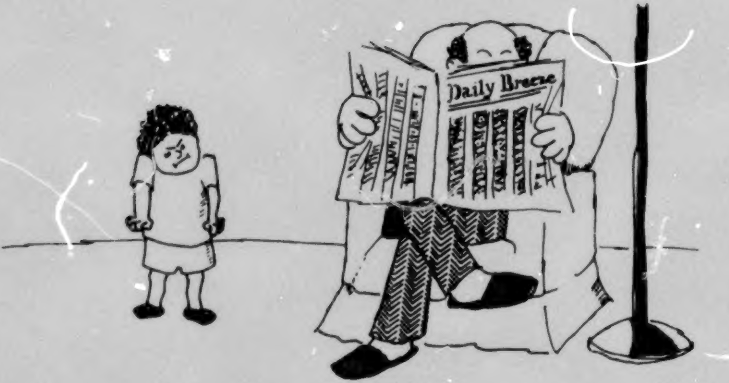
Look back at the conversation to see where she did each of these things. Also, think back to the film and try to recall if Laura responded in these ways.

I did everything but listen. If I had, I might have found out what was troubling her, and we both would have felt a lot better.

Then I started thinking back to other times when my huband and I thought *we were listening to Bobby and Cheryl. I remembered incidents like this:*

"Daddy?"
"Mmmmmmmm."
"I cleaned up my room today all by myself."
"Mmmmmmmm."
"Daddy? . . . DADDY!"
"What is it, Cheryl?"

Because my husband heard Cheryl's words, he thought he was listening to her and couldn't understand why she was so upset. But Cheryl wanted his full undivided attention, and she knew she wasn't getting it. She knew he wasn't really listening. I hate to admit it, but in our case what Bonnie said was right on target . . .



May 20

Dear Diary,

I came across an article on listening in a magazine today and tore out this clipping:

This is based on the active listening technique described by Dr. Thomas Gordon in *P.E.T., Parent Effectiveness Training.*

In Active Listening, the person who listens is as important as the speaker. Parents who listen in this way try to help their children understand what they are thinking and feeling, for:

Children can't always say
exactly what they mean.

For example, "I don't like the new baby" could really mean "I'm scared you don't love me anymore."

No matter how foolish or stupid children's words sound to parents, the words are sensible to the child. Not only that, but they would be sensible to the parents too if they saw the situation as the child did.

By listening actively, parents help children explore and sort out such feelings. Often — just by putting their thoughts into words and sharing them with someone — children can find solutions to their own problems.

There are different ways parents can let their children know they're listening. Sometimes responses like "Oh" or "I see" are enough. At other times, children need some encouragement to continue. In such a case, a parent might say: "Tell me more." Or, "Go on, I'm listening."

Sometimes there's no need to say anything. An alert silence can let a child know a parent is listening closely and thinking about what is being said. At other times, though, a parent may have to ask questions or repeat the child's question to be sure he or she understood what was being said.

It sounds like a lot of work, but it does make sense. It's certainly worth keeping in mind. . .

May 25

Dear Diary,

When I came home from work today, Bobby seemed upset. I decided this was a good time to try out what I've learned about active listening. This is how things went.

Have students analyze how this conversation differs from the previous one with Cheryl.

Bobby: "Mrs. O'Grady is really dumb."
Me: "You're angry at Mrs. O'Grady?"
Bobby: "Yes. She's a stupid babysitter. She thinks Cheryl's so nice. Cheryl's just a dummy."
Me: "Oh, dear. You're angry at your sister, too?"
Bobby: "Yes. She gets to do everything — just because she's bigger. She thinks she's such a big shot."
Me: (Silence)
Bobby: "Like today she got to go to the movies with her friends. And I had to stay home. It's not fair just she got to go."
Me: "You wanted to be able to go to the movies, too?"
Bobby: "Yes. But Mrs. O'Grady wouldn't let me. She said I have to wait 'til I'm older. Boy, is she dumb."
Me: "What else happened?"
Bobby: "I cried. And Cheryl called me a baby and said that's why I couldn't go to the movies."
Me: "So Cheryl teased you, and that made you feel even worse?"
Bobby: "Yes. She thinks she's so big."
Me: "Sounds like today wasn't a good day for you. I'm sorry to hear that, because you're a very special person, too. Did you know that?"
Bobby: "Me?"
Me: "Yes, you. And you know what else?"
Bobby: "What?"
Me: "It's only 6:30 and you don't have to go to bed for another hour, so we have time to think up something fun to do together."
Bobby: "Just you and me?"
Me: "Just the two of us. So what'll it be, little shot?"

Mrs. O'Grady is a very good babysitter, and I also know that Bobby really likes her. If I reminded Bobby of that, or scolded him for being angry, I would only have upset him more. So instead, I tried to find out what was really bothering him. Once I learned that he was just feeling left out, it was easy to find a way to let him know that he, too, is very important to us.

Accepting the reality of Bobby's feelings ties in with the unit *Identity.*

That wasn't very hard at all. It seems that listening to your children is largely a matter of instinct and common sense . . .

June 5

Dear Diary,

Yesterday when I went to pick Cheryl up from nursery school, I stayed and talked with her new teacher for a while. I mentioned our recent efforts to listen better to Cheryl and Bobby, and she said that listening is a skill that she, as a teacher, has had to work on too. She said that she learns a lot about children in her class by "listening" to their facial expressions, tone of voice, posture, gestures, and movement. This **Body Language** *is one of the most effective methods of communication children have. Their* **Behavior**, *too, she said, often speaks louder than words.*

Body language is dealt with again in the unit on *Loving Your Children.*

On the bus home, I thought about how Cheryl and Bobby still use their bodies to express their feelings. When Cheryl is sad, for example, we can tell by the way her shoulders droop and the way she drags her feet. When Bobby is excited, his eyes light up and he talks nonstop.

The more I think about it, the more I realize that children have lots to say, and lots of ways to say it. It's just up to us to listen . . .

June 25

Dear Diary,

Last night, Sam and I were talking about Cheryl and Bobby. We realized that we've both learned a lot more about them since we started talking less and listening more. It's been fascinating looking at how their minds work and how they learn. We feel a lot closer to them and we think that by showing them we value what they have to say, we've given their self-confidence a healthy boost.

By and large, we've been pretty successful in our efforts to listen more actively to our children. There have been some flops, of course. Usually these failures happen when we don't really have our minds on what our kids are saying, or when we go overboard and ask too many questions. Our successes, on the other hand, seem to result when we do these three things:

LET OUR CHILDREN KNOW WE'RE AVAILABLE TO LISTEN.

We try to listen to Cheryl and Bobby right when they need us. Sometimes we have to put down the newspaper or turn off the iron in order to give them our full attention.

Sometimes, though, we just can't listen when our kids want us to. When this happens, we tell our children *why* we can't listen right then, and *when* we'll be able to.

TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT OUR CHILDREN ARE TRYING TO SAY.

We've learned that interrupting children or making judgments about what they're saying does not lead to understanding. Instead, we try to watch, listen, and, if necessary, ask questions or repeat what our children have said. We keep asking ourselves: What are they thinking, feeling, trying to say? Listening comes a lot easier when we follow our children's cues and let them lead the way.

ACT ON WHAT WE LEARN FROM LISTENING.

When we've really heard what Cheryl and Bobby are trying to say, Sam and I can be more skillful in helping them. They may need sympathy or more attention. Sometimes they want to share an important moment. At other times they need help figuring out a problem or correcting a misunderstanding. Whatever it is, we try to help. Helping our children understand and accept their own feelings and reactions is a great source of satisfaction to us both.

Sometimes, of course, we don't like what Cheryl and Bobby have to say or the way they behave. Sometimes we don't agree with them. And sometimes we're not sure how to respond. By listening to their point of view and respecting their feelings, though, we can better understand how they see things.

But we still have a lot to learn . . .

Sometimes we can help children to listen to themselves, too, — to gain a better understanding of their own feelings.

See: *I Have Feelings,* a book for children by Terry Berger. (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1971.)

Characters:

Laura Riley — *a young pregnant woman*
Hunter Riley — *her husband*
Ned Riley — *Hunter's brother*
Nancy Riley — *Ned's wife*
Little Ned — *their son*
Andy and Zach — *Ned's brothers*
Bill — *Hunter's friend*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

The Secret of Little Ned

Laura and Hunter Riley are taking care of their nephew, Little Ned, while his parents attend a wedding. From the moment his parents drop him off, Little Ned seems to have something on his mind. He refuses to let Hunter pick him up, and he is very upset when Laura doesn't notice that he took a phone message all by himself. When Laura laughs at a mistake he makes in the grocery store, and gives him the smaller bag to carry home, Little Ned's irritation increases.

Laura becomes more and more puzzled and upset by Little Ned's hostility to her and her inability to understand why he is so unhappy. She feels even worse after Hunter takes Little Ned to help load wood and has no problem at all with him. Then, when Little Ned brings down a beer can that Hunter had left upstairs, Laura thinks back on the day's events and discovers his secret. When Little Ned's family returns, they find him happily helping Hunter fix the roof.

Documentary:

Dr. James L. Hymes, Jr., discusses the signals that children use to convey their feelings to parents. He emphasizes the idea that children often encode their feelings, but parents can learn to decipher the true message.

Have the students discuss the different cues the children in the documentary are giving their parents.

WHAT WAS LITTLE NED'S SECRET?

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

What signs did Ned give Hunter and Laura that something was wrong?

- Why did it take Hunter and Laura so long to figure out what was bothering Ned?
- Do parents have to be specially trained in listening skills to pick up on the cues that children send?

Comments: Little Ned found a great many ways of conveying his unhappiness. His repeated requests to differentiate his abilities from Zach's were an appeal for his relatives to treat him responsibly. Climbing onto the truck, asking to carry grocery bags and run errands were but some of the signs he sent. Hunter and Laura, until the end of the program, missed these many signs, partly because they weren't looking for them. Also, with their lack of experience, they did not realize that a child will not — and sometimes cannot — tell a parent what is bothering him. Laura and Hunter do not need special training in order to learn what they should listen for. They do need to know, however, that it is important to listen to children and observe their behavior.

Why wasn't the weekend as much fun as Laura had hoped it would be?

- Did Laura ignore Little Ned's needs in the hopes that his "problem" would go away?
- Did Laura have unreal expectations about what it is like to take care of children?
- Did Hunter help out Laura or aggravate the situation?

Comments: Laura's desire for a weekend of fun for both the boys and for her and Hunter is a natural one. This weekend was especially important for Laura in that it was her first childcare experience on an extended basis. It is difficult to say whether she subconsciously denied Ned's unhappiness in order to keep the weekend at its "fun" level. Certainly, though, her lack of experience, coupled with Hunter's denial of any problem, didn't serve to help the situation. If Laura had been more sensitive to the child's needs, much of the weekend's lost fun could have been recouped.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
WHO'S LISTENING?

Think of someone you know who is a good listener, and another person who doesn't listen well. Write a paragraph or two about each person, describing:

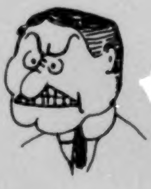
why you like, or don't like, to talk to that person
how the person responds to what you say
how that person makes you feel
when you seek that person out

activity #2
BODY TALK

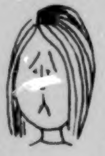
Our behavior and body language often express our thoughts and feelings even more clearly than words. Use facial expressions, gestures, posture, body movement, and actions — but not words — to express different emotions. Pretend, for example, that:

Have the other students in the class "listen" to this body talk and describe what they "hear."

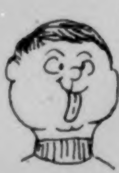
You are angry.



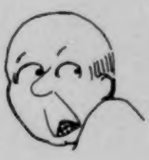
You feel sad.



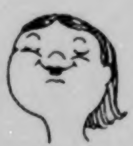
You want attention.



You are afraid.



You are happy.



You feel defeated.

You are confused.

activity #3
WHAT'S GOING ON?

Sometimes children's words don't clearly show what they're thinking and feeling. Sometimes parents have to listen and observe very carefully to hear what a child is really saying.

Take turns role-playing each of the following situations with your classmates. In each situation, one student should take the part of the child, and another the parent. When you're finished, have the rest of the class discuss:

what cues the child gave about his or her feelings and thoughts
how effective the parent's responses were
what else the parent could have done

Situation #1

What Mr. Antonioni knows is:

At the dinner table 5-year-old Arlene just picks at her food. She doesn't even eat her lasagna, and lasagna is her favorite food. When her father asks what's wrong, she just mumbles, "I'm not hungry."

What Mr. Antonioni doesn't know is:

Arlene had a terrible day at kindergarten. She spilled chocolate milk on her new dress, she couldn't make her S's come our right, and Tommy Lynch made fun of her new glasses.

Situation #2

What Mrs. Janowski knows is:

Ever since they moved into their new apartment, 18-month-old Wanda has cried every night after being put into her bed. She never did this before.

What Mrs. Janowski doesn't know is:

The neon light on the restaurant across the street shines into Wanda's room after it gets dark and keeps her awake.

Situation #3

What Mr. White knows is:

All of a sudden 4-year-old Stevie won't leave his father's side. He won't go down to the playroom in the basement by himself. He won't even go out to the backyard to play unless someone comes with him. And he puts up a terrible fuss about going to bed at night.

What Mr. White doesn't know is:

When Stevie was home with the babysitter the other night, he saw a movie about a man who kidnapped little children when they were alone.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe children with their parents in stores, parks, playgrounds and other public places. Take notes on:

   who does the most talking
   what you think children are trying to say
   how parents respond to their children's questions, comments, and behaviors

   Share your observations with your classmates.

Be sure students record actual behaviors and not their interpretations of the behaviors.

2. Observe a child regularly over a period of several weeks. Keep a diary of his or her words and actions:
   What do you learn about this child?
   What are his or her concerns, needs, thoughts and feelings?
   How could parents benefit from such a close observation of their children?
3. Invite a child psychiatrist or counselor to talk to your class about the role that listening plays in therapy and how it can be applied to families. Is this a skill that parents can learn?
4. Play "Telephone." This is the game where someone starts a rumor, and then each person whispers it into the ear of the next person. The last person announces what he or she heard, and this is compared with the original rumor. Usually the final version is very different from the first. What does this game tell you about how well we listen to each other?

It shows how much of our "listening" is really interpretation.

5. Try listening actively with a child you know. How does it work out? What do you learn?

to discuss

1. Think back to when you were a child:

   Do you remember times when you felt someone wasn't really listening to you?
   How did this make you feel?
   What did you do when it happened?
   Do you still feel that way sometimes?
   How does it affect you now?
   What do you do about it now?

Sometimes they're not sure how parents will react; sometimes they really don't know, or can't articulate, what they mean. An adult who is a careful listener, however, can get a pretty good idea of what children are trying to say.

2. Why don't children always say what they mean?
3. What do you suppose are some of the reasons why many adults don't really listen to children? What does this show about their attitude toward children?
4. Do you think listening is becoming a dying art? If so, what might some of the reasons be?
5. Why is it sometimes easier to talk to a stranger — for example, a hairdresser, bartender, or therapist — than to a close friend or family member? Can these casual bonds ever make up for having our loved ones hear us?
6. Do we listen selectively? In other words:
   Do we sometimes hear only what we want to hear — good news but not bad news, for example?
   Do we listen to some people more seriously than to others — males more than females, for example, or people of certain ethnic or racial groups more than others?
   Why does this happen?
7. Did you ever feel that someone didn't really mean what they were saying to you? How were you able to tell what their real thoughts and feelings were?
8. Do adults sometimes need to listen more closely to each other? How might listening actively help strengthen a marriage or other partnership?

GRAB BAG

to research

1. The active listening process as described in Thomas Gordon's book, *Parent Effectiveness Training*.
2. The science of kinesics, or body language.
3. Art and dance therapy. How do children express their thoughts and feelings through art and movement?
4. Poems, stories, and letters written by children. What are some of the things children have to say about themselves and other people and things? (*Kids* magazine is one good source of such material.)

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that can give you more information on . . .

. . . listening to children

Between Parent and Child. Dr. Haim G. Ginott. New York: Avon Books, 1965. (paperback)

Liberated Parents, Liberated Children. Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish. New York: Avon Books, 1974. (paperback)

P.E.T., Parent Effectiveness Training. Dr. Thomas Gordon. New York: New American Library, 1970. (paperback)

. . . listening to body language and behavior

Body Language. Julius Fast. New York: M. Evans and Company, 1970. (paperback)

The Body Language of Children. S. Szasz. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978.

P.S. Your Not Listening. Eleanor Craig. New York: Signet, 1973. (paperback)

PARENTING STYLES: AVOIDING THE EXTREMES

The Accident

TO BEGIN...

Fortunately, there is no one right way to behave as a parent, just as there is no one correct way to be a child. This unit should help students recognize that there is a wide variation in parenting styles. Still, there are styles of parenting which are, as the posters used to say about war,

NOT GOOD FOR CHILDREN AND OTHER LIVING THINGS

This unit will look at these extreme styles of parenting and help students find a more balanced approach.

To begin the unit, you might have students come up with a list of different parenting styles (strict, lenient, etc.). Help them see the broad range of styles, and ask them if some styles are more acceptable than others.

FROM THE EDITORS

Styles in parenting are in a state of flux. Things our parents and grandparents took for granted seem unclear and uncertain to many of us. Parents may raise their own children one way, but see and hear about many other approaches in the homes of friends, on TV, in books and magazines, and in classrooms and parent groups.
No wonder many parents are confused.

In this booklet you will learn how attitudes toward childrearing have changed over the past 50 years. You will read about how children are affected by some extreme approaches to childrearing. You will learn how in parenting, as in many other areas, moderation is the best rule.

THE BIG IDEAS

- Children need to be permitted to explore the world and move about freely.
- Children also need to be protected from hurting themselves and other people.
- A parenting style that strikes a balance — in other words, that is neither overpermissive nor overprotective — is most likely to enhance children's growth.

> Be not too zealous;
> moderation is best in all things.
> — *Theognis*

FINDING A BALANCE

Sometimes scales bounce up and down before they settle around the center. This search for balance has also been true of our attitudes toward children and our approach to raising them.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, for example, children were seen as lumps of clay to be molded into a certain shape. The parent's role was to instill proper habits in children. Thumb-sucking was prevented by pinning children's sleeves over their fingers. Feeding was done strictly on schedule.

This was the Victorian Age — the heyday of "spare the rod and spoil the child" and "children should be seen and not heard." The parent's word was law, and children were not even allowed to question it.

Not much was known about children's developmental needs. Individual differences were totally ignored. Psychologist John Watson and others told parents that there was only one sensible way to raise children:

Treat them as though they were young adults.

THE PENDULUM SHIFTS

Then, as our knowledge about children began to grow, our attitude toward them began to soften. We learned how the bodies and minds of children are different from those of adults. We no longer saw the child as a miniature adult. We realized that children cannot be forced to live by adult standards so early in life without doing them damage.

Parents were encouraged to be more permissive and to give children room to grow. Life at home and at school became less regimented.

But, as often happens when a sudden change in attitude takes place, some parents overreacted. They tried to make up for past mistakes by adopting an "anything goes" attitude toward their children. These parents looked on children as wildflowers who needed complete freedom to grow. They believed that if they set any limits, they would frustrate children and inhibit their growth. These parents gave their children more freedom than they could handle.

> **In other words, the sound idea that children need freedom to explore the world was sometimes interpreted to mean "children need to be permitted to do anything they want."**

SHIFTING STYLES

It soon became obvious that a total lack of limits was as harmful to children as too many. In the name of permissiveness, some parents gave up responsibility for their children. People began to blame permisiveness for all the problems of youth — from dirty feet to drug abuse.

When faced with the new ideas about children, other parents clung stubbornly to the old ways. "What was good enough for me is good enough for my children" was the motto of these people.

And many people were just plain confused. Many doubts were raised in their minds — doubts such as:

Am I being too strict with my kids?	OR	Do I let them get away with too much?
Should I be less protective of my son?	OR	Will he get hurt if I don't keep a firm grip on him?

Even today, many parents — experienced as well as new — don't feel completely comfortable about how they are raising their children.

Our past experience and present knowledge, however, show that choosing an effective parenting style is not a question of "either/or." It is a matter of finding a comfortable balance. We know now that children need to be *both* permitted and protected — but not too much.

PIONEERS IN PERMISSIVENESS

Many people contributed to this century's attitude toward children, including: psychologist **Sigmund Freud**; educator **John Dewey**; pediatrician **Arnold Gesell**; and anthropologists **Margaret Mead** and **Ruth Benedict**. One person who popularized many of the new notions has become known in almost every household — **Dr. Benjamin Spock**.

Dr. Spock's manual on *Baby and Child Care* has probably influenced more parents than any other book on child care. Many people swear by him. Others swear at him. They accuse Dr. Spock of overpermissiveness. Public figures like Spiro Agnew have even blamed him for the opposition of young people to the Vietnam War.

In the first edition of *Baby and Child Care* (1946), Dr. Spock spoke out against the strict practices of infant feeding that existed at the time. It was believed then that babies should be fed every 4 hours, on the dot — no matter how hard they cried. Dr. Spock recommended that parents take into account the differences among children. He advised parents to set up feeding times based on those differences.

In the second edition of his book (1957), Dr. Spock tried to help parents who were confused by the new permissiveness. He explained that children still needed the firm leadership of their parents.

Today, in the 1976 edition of *Baby and Child Care*, Dr. Spock says that:

> ... *strictness or permissiveness is not the real issue. Good-hearted parents who aren't afraid to be firm when it is necessary can get good results with either moderate strictness or moderate permissiveness. On the other hand, a permissiveness that comes from harsh feelings or a permissiveness that is timid or vacillating can each lead to poor results. The real issue is what spirit the parent puts into managing the child and what attitude is engendered in the child as a result.*

HOW HAVE DR. SPOCK'S ATTITUDES CHANGED OVER THE YEARS? IS HE OVERPERMISSIVE?

THE CASE FOR PERMISSIVENESS...

CHILDREN NEED FREEDOM.

They need to be permitted — even encouraged — to:

- explore the world
- use their senses
- move about freely
- make mistakes.

Opportunities such as these give children freedom to grow in all areas.

Children need to run, jump, climb and skip. Sometimes parents worry that children are climbing too high or running too fast. But children are pretty quick to learn how to care for their own safety. They are adventurous but cautious. By letting children trust their own

TOO MUCH FREEDOM OVERWHELMS CHILDREN.

Children do not need the freedom to:

- destroy property
- act on all their impulses
- hurt themselves or others
- give up trying.

This is being extreme.

This is no longer permissiveness. This is indulgence.

When parents let children do anything they want, children feel abandoned. They think their parents don't care what happens to them. Overpermissiveness is frightening to children. It's scary to think that no one will stop you if you get out of control.

bodies and perceptions, parents help keep them safe.

Children also need to make choices, take on responsibility, freely express their ideas and wishes — even say "no" now and then. When parents permit children to do things for themselves — even when parents could do it better or faster — they help children most.

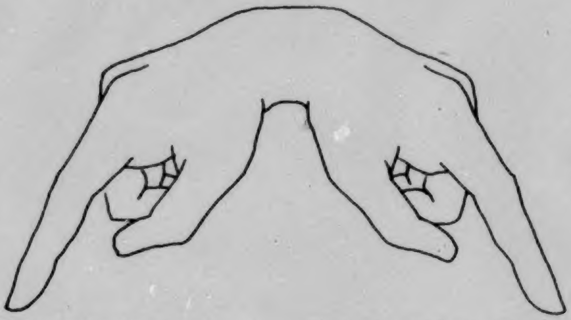
PERMISSIVENESS IS GIVING CHILDREN THE FREEDOM THEY NEED TO GROW WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF SAFETY AND REGARD FOR OTHERS.

Such indulged children often become self-centered. They have trouble getting along with others, because they are used to having things their own way. Nothing pleases them.

Parents may be overpermissive for different reasons. Some may fear their children won't love them if they say "no." Some may want their children to do all the things they were never able to do. In any case, parents are kinder to their children, and their children respect them more, when they set and enforce some limits.

FREEDOM DOES NOT MEAN LICENSE.

. . . AND THE CASE FOR PROTECTIVENESS



CHILDREN NEED LIMITS.

They want:
- guidance
  - advice
    - regularity
      - routine.

When parents protect their children from hurting themselves and others, parents help children feel secure.

Children are vulnerable to accidents. They need to be protected from serious falls, cuts, and bumps. They need an environment — both indoors and out — that is safe to explore.

In fact, accidents are the leading cause of death and injuries in young children.

TOO MANY LIMITS SMOTHER CHILDREN.

Children do not need to be:
- overdirected
  - overstructured
    - told how to do everything
      - shown how to to do everything.

And this, too, is a parenting extreme.

Children also need clear guidelines for behavior. They need help controlling their impulses. By setting limits, parents say to children: You don't have to be afraid of going too far. I won't let you get hurt.

By placing a fence around the playground, children are given freedom to play inside without having to worry about where the boundaries are.

Children also need to learn which behaviors are acceptable and which are not. Without this knowledge, they are ill-prepared for life in the real world. They have trouble adjusting to society.

PROTECTION IS SETTING REASONABLE RULES FOR CHILDREN'S SAFETY AND BEHAVIOR.

Such restrictions interfere with children's growth.

When parents hold onto children too tightly, they may save them from physical harm, but harm their spirit. Children cannot be shielded from all harm. And sometimes they have to learn the painful way. If parents never let children develop a sense of danger, children are more likely to get hurt when their parents are not around.

Children who are given reasonable freedom to explore the world develop a remarkable sense of what is safe for them. Children who are overprotected are the ones most likely to get hurt when a parent is not there to protect them.

If parents do everything for a child, what will the child do later on when there is no one around? The child will never have a chance to become competent or independent.

Overprotective parents may be overly concerned about their children's welfare. Or they may think children just can't do things for themselves. In any case:

PROTECTION DOES NOT MEAN IMPRISONMENT.

STAYING ON BALANCE

Fortunately, children thrive under many different styles of parenting. Parents can choose a style based on what is best for them and their children.

All parents have different personalities and life styles. Some are more easy-going, some more strict. Some are comfortable raising their children in ways that would make others squirm.

In the same way, some children can handle more freedom than others. Some children need to be held by tighter reins; some need more slack. As children grow older and become more responsible, parents can gradually let out the reins. Some things that cannot be permitted at 2 can be permitted at 5.

And some situations call for more control than others. There are some situations where parents cannot be flexible. They cannot allow children to hurt themselves or others, for example, or to commit an illegal act. In other special situations — such as moving, illness, death or divorce — parents may be more permissive.

The child who is coping with a special stress may need to be given time to work it out. Much of her energy is deflected into worry or tension about the changes she is facing.

At any rate, there are few absolutes when it comes to parenting styles. There is no magic set of limits that's good for the child — just these general guidelines:

GIVE CHILDREN PERMISSION TO GROW AND PROTECTION FROM HARM.

Children need strong parents who are actively involved in their lives, but who respect children's freedom and dignity.

STAY AWAY FROM THE EXTREMES OF OVERPROTECTION AND OVERPERMISSIVENESS.

Neither extreme is in the best interests of the child. Either one can lead to resentment, hostility, and even delinquent behavior

Just where parents are between the extremes is not of major importance. What is important is that their style of parenting be reasonable and motivated by love and respect for the child. Between the extremes are many approaches that make room both for the parent's sanity and the child's growth.

Wesley Becker divided disciplinary techniques into *love-oriented* (praising, reasoning, and withdrawing love) and *power-assertive* (typically, physical punishment). Children seem more likely to feel responsible for their actions and to be cooperative with others if parents tend to use love-oriented techniques. Power-assertion is associated with non-cooperation and aggression in children.

A BALANCING ACT

Steering a clear course between being too indulgent and too restrictive is usually a matter of common sense. Each situation below describes one approach that is clearly too permissive, one that is too protective, and one that strikes a balance between the two extremes.

Have students think of some other ways to handle each situation.

SITUATION: YOUR 9 MONTH OLD IS AT THE STAGE WHERE SHE'S INTO EVERYTHING.

Too Protective		Too Permissive
You keep her in a playpen all the time.	You remove breakable and dangerous items from certain areas of your home and let her crawl about there, keeping an eye out just in case.	You let her crawl around everywhere on her own.

SITUATION: YOUR 2 YEAR OLD WANTS TO LEARN HOW TO TIE HIS SHOELACES BY HIMSELF.

Too Protective		Too Permissive
You let him, but at the first sign of a mistake, you stop him and show him how to do it right.	You let him do as much as he wants to do by himself. If the laces end up wrong, you praise him for his efforts and show him how to tie them even better.	You leave him to figure it out by himself, and let him go to school tripping over his shoelaces.

SITUATION: YOUR 3 YEAR OLD STARTS TO QUARREL WITH HIS BEST FRIEND.

Too Protective		Too Permissive
At the first sign of a disagreement, you intervene, separate the children, and send the friend home.	When you hear the children arguing, you stand by to see if they can resolve their disagreement without force. If they start hitting each other, you quickly put a stop to their fighting and help them talk things out.	You leave them to solve things themselves, even when it turns into a fist fight in which one child is clearly the loser.

SITUATION: YOUR 5 YEAR OLD WANTS TO CHOOSE HIS OWN CLOTHES AND DRESS HIMSELF FOR SCHOOL.

Too Protective		Too Permissive
You insist on choosing his clothes and dressing him to save time and make sure he gets everything right.	You give him a choice of 2 or 3 items each day, and leave plenty of time for him to dress himself — standing by to help if he wants it.	You let him wear anything he wants even if it's inappropriate, and leave him to dress himself, even if his shirt is inside out and his shoes on the wrong feet.

Characters:

Bob Hornbrenner — *a young divorced father*
Sheila Hornbrenner — *Bob's ex-wife*
April Hornbrenner — *18-month-old daughter of Sheila and Bob*
Bill Hall — *Sheila's current date*
Bonnie Hornbrenner — *Bob's mother*
Hank Hornbrenner — *Bob's brother*
Sandy and David Orloff — *friends of Sheila*
The Orloff Children
The Doctor
The Car Vandal

FILM REVIEW SECTION

The Accident

While Bob Hornbrenner is taking care of his daughter, April, she has a bad fall from a merry-go-round at the playground. Bob and his mother rush April to the hospital for tests. Once Bob finds out that April is out of danger, he calls his ex-wife, Sheila.

Sheila is alarmed by April's accident. She blames Bob for being overpermissive with their daughter. Bob is as upset as Sheila over what has happened, but doesn't think the accident was caused by being overpermissive. In fact, Bob thinks that if anyone has a bad parenting style, it is Sheila. From his observations, Sheila is far too protective of April. Once April comes home from the hospital, Bob and Sheila continue their discussion of who has the better parenting style.

WHY DOES BOB THINK THAT SHEILA IS TOO PROTECTIVE OF APRIL?

WHY DOES SHEILA THINK THAT BOB IS TOO PERMISSIVE WITH APRIL?

Documentary:

Members of a parent group give their views on and experiences with parenting extremes. Parents talk about times that they have been too protective or too permissive with their children. The consensus of the group is that, difficult though it may be, it is in the child's best interest for parents to strike a balance between these two extremes.

Have the students discuss how they think the extreme behaviors cited by the parents might have affected their children.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

What parenting styles did Bob and Sheila have?

- Was Sheila overprotective?
- Was Bob overpermissive?
- Were both as far to the extreme as the other assumed him or her to be?

Comments: If parenting styles can be viewed as a continuum, with one end being overprotectiveness and the other overpermissiveness, Sheila would be close to the former end and Bob to the latter. Neither, it would seem, though, was as far to the extreme position as his/her ex-spouse believed him/her to be. Bob did not appear to be an irresponsible parent who let his child run free. Sheila, likewise, did not seem to be a mother who refused to ever let her child do or try anything. Nonetheless, both Bob and Sheila thought that their position, slightly to the right or left of center, was the preferred one for raising children.

Did Bob or Sheila learn anything about the extremes of parenting from their encounters with people other than each other?

- What effect did Sandy Orloff have on her children?
- With what kind of parenting style was the car vandal raised?

Comments: Both Bob and Sheila begin to get some insight into the idea that even their own parenting styles may lead to problems when carried to the extremes. Sheila sees, for example, that Sandy Orloff stifles her children's growth — as well as that of her husband and friends. Bob begins to realize also, following his encounter with the vandals, that a truly overpermissively raised child has no sense of values or direction. So while Bob and Sheila do not change their opinions in this program, they do learn to qualify their enthusiasm for one particular style over another.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
DEAR MOM

Your mother has just spent the weekend visiting you and your family. A few days later you receive a letter from her. After thanking you for your hospitality, she expresses some concern that you and your spouse are too permissive with your children. She seems especially upset by the way you let the children participate in the making of family decisions. "That would never have happened in my day," she writes.

HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND TO YOUR MOTHER'S COMMENT IN YOUR RETURN LETTER? ?

activity #2
A STYLE WITH STYLE

Think of a parent whose style of parenting you admire. Write a profile of this parent describing:

- what you admire about the parent's style
- how the parent's childrearing habits affect his or her children
- how this parent's style is similar to or differs from the way in which you were raised.

activity #3
AN EXTREME SITUATION

Here are three different situations. For each one, describe an approach that is too permissive, one that is too protective, and one that is between the two extremes (see box on page 9).

SITUATION: YOUR 3-YEAR-OLD WANTS TO GO ON THE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT BY HIMSELF.

SITUATION: YOUR 3-YEAR-OLD GETS HUNGRY BETWEEN MEALS SOMETIMES.

SITUATION: YOUR 5-YEAR-OLD HATES TO GO TO BED.

For example:

Too Protective		Too Permissive
YOU INSIST ON LIGHTS OUT AT 7 P.M. EVERY NIGHT	YOU SET A REGULAR BED TIME, AT WHICH TIME SHE MUST GO TO HER ROOM. IF SHE'S NOT SLEEPY, SHE CAN LOOK AT BOOKS FOR A WHILE, BUT SHE MUST STAY THERE.	YOU LET HER GO TO BED WHENEVER AND WHEREEVER SHE WANTS. WHEN SHE FALLS TO SLEEP IN THE LIVING ROOM, YOU PICK HER UP AND CARRY HER TO BED.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe parents with their children in stores, parks, playgrounds, and other public places.

Grocery stores seem to cause parents to behave in punitive ways toward children. Zoos bring out their best behavior.

   - What do they do to protect their children from harm?
   - What do they do to permit them to grow?
   - Are some parents overprotective or overpermissive, in your opinion?
   - What would you have done in each case?

   Share your observations with your classmates.
2. Talk to your parents, grandparents and other adults about childrearing practices over the years:
   - How were they raised?
   - How have attitudes and practices changed since that time?
   - How did they decide on their own style of childrearing?
3. Take a poll among the students in your school to find out their feelings about the way their parents brought them up:
   - How many feel their parents were too strict?
   - How many feel their parents were too lenient?
   - How many feel their parents struck a good balance?

to discuss

1. Are childrearing theories just fads? Is the pendulum likely to swing back at any time to a more restrictive attitude toward raising children? Why or why not?

Ask the students how this will affect their own behavior as parents.

2. How do you feel about how you were raised? Do you think your parents were too strict? Too lenient?
3. Besides overprotection and overpermissiveness, what are some other extremes that parents should stay away from?
4. Were you ever in a situation where you didn't know the rules or the limits? How did you feel? How do you think a child with too much freedom might feel?
5. Are parents more protective of some children than others — for example, girls, first born children, children with handicaps, or seriously ill children more than others? In each case, should they be?
6. What if two parents have different styles of parenting. How do they resolve their differences? Is it important that their styles be consistent? Will they complement or contradict each other?

Parents should try to come to some agreement about their approach to raising the child so the child does not get mixed messages. It is not a good idea to disagree in front of the child. It is better to talk over and resolve differences in private.

7. Are certain styles of parenting associated with certain cultural groups — for example, protectiveness with Jewish families, strictness with Black families, permissiveness with middle income families? Are these stereotypes true or false? How have they come about?

to research

1. How childrearing practices have changed during this century. A good way to trace these changes is to go through some of the back issues of *Infant Care*, a U.S. Government publication first issued in 1914.
2. People who have influenced our attitudes toward children during this century. For example, read about the work of John Watson; Benjamin Spock; Margaret Mead; and Arnold Gesell.
3. Diana Baumrind's writings on the difference between authoritarian and authoritative parents.

Diana Baumrind has been studying a group of 150 children since 1967. She finds 3 types of parents, each with a different effect upon the child:

Authoritarian parents "value obedience as a virtue and believe in restricting the child's autonomy."
Permissive parents "aim to give the child as much freedom as is consistent with survival."
Authoritative parents "attempt to direct the child's activities in a rational, issue-oriented manner."
In this research, authoritative parents seem to be proving the most effective as judged by such qualities in their children as:
— social responsibility
— independence
— vigor
— orientation to succeed.
See *Minnesota Symposium on Child Psychology,* Vol. 7. Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 1973. A. Pick (ed.).

4. The relationship between overprotectiveness or overpermissiveness and self-esteem.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on:

. . . permissiveness and protectiveness

Baby and Child Care. Dr. Benjamin Spock. New York: Pocket Books, 1976. (paperback)

Black Child Care. James P. Comer, M.D., and Alvin F. Poussaint, M.D. New York: Pocket Books, 1975. (paperback)

Your Child's Self-Esteem. Dorothy Corkville Briggs. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1970. (paperback)

. . . the history of childrearing habits and attitudes toward children

Centuries of Childhood. Philippe Aries. New York: Vintage Books, 1962. (paperback)

Childhood and History in America. Glenn Davis. New York: Psychohistory Press, 1976.

History of Childhood. Lloyd deMause, ed. New York: Psychohistory Press, 1976.

SOCIAL SKILLS: MORE THAN MANNERS

New Kid on the Block

TO BEGIN...

Children are not born with social skills. They are, however, born with a huge interest in other people — which expands as parents give them food and love and care. This interest in others grows to such an extent that they try to please their parents, even if it sometimes means they put their wants aside.

Children's responsiveness to other people is the root of social skills. Parents build upon this interest as they help them learn the tools for getting along with others.

You might develop interest in this unit by bringing in a few photographs of people in different social situations — children in a classroom, a family in the home, people on a bus or visitors in a foreign country. Ask students what the people in the photos needed to know to get along with other people.

FROM THE EDITORS

All parents want their children to learn to get along with other people. Some parents think they have to teach their children to like other people. That's not true. Children are interested in other people right from birth. The parent's job is to build upon their child's desire to get along with people.

In this booklet you will learn what social skills are. You'll find out how young children acquire social skills and some ways parents can make this learning possible.

THE BIG IDEAS

Social skills are more than manners; they are the basic tools needed for getting along with other people.

Getting along with others is a developmental task. See unit *Growing Up: Children Do Their Best.*

At first children think only of themselves. They have to learn how to see the point of view of others.

Parents can help their children learn social skills by their example, by direct instruction, and by giving them experiences with other people.

SOCIAL SKILLS: More than Manners

> We need other people,
> not in order to stay alive,
> but to be fully human. . . .
>
> — Hugh Prather
> *Notes on Love and Courage*
> (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1977)

Getting along with other people is the heart of living. Knowing how to interact with others is necessary for being part of any group — family, neighborhood, school, job, community organization or nation. Through each new encounter, we stretch our understanding of ourselves and others. Being able to understand and reach out to others makes us feel needed and competent, a part of the group and yet uniquely special — alive.

"We are producing too many people who function less well than they could, who enjoy themselves less and who are less of a joy for others to live near — people who contribute less than they could and who hurt more than humans must."
— James L. Hymes, Jr.
Introduction to *The Formative Years.* (David Edge, Ed.)

A child learns to get along with one or a few people. The grown-up, on the other hand, has a whole network of relationships to balance.

Social skills are more than manners. It's good manners to say "Please" or hold a door open for someone else, but these may be only trappings. Social skills are responses which express basic attitudes such as:

showing interest in others
giving and receiving gracefully
asserting our needs and rights in appropriate ways
showing consideration and sympathy
communicating effectively.

We are not born with these skills, but we're born with a need to love and be loved. Learning how to get along with others is a process that begins at birth and continues throughout life.

Let's take a look at how this process begins.

Manners Are a Means to an End

Manners are agreed upon ways that people from different cultures speak and act. Manners express their basic attitudes toward other people. For instance, saying "I'm very glad to meet you" is a way to show interest and friendliness toward someone we have just met. Standing up when another person enters the room is a way of showing respect. Although manners can become mechanical when people use them without sincerity, most manners have developed from people's basic wish to show their consideration of others.

The specific behavior varies from one group of people to another, but in general, manners communicate the same basic feelings. In the Hopi culture, for instance, children are taught to look down when spoken to. Most Anglo-American children, on the other hand, are taught to look directly at the speaker. Both manners, however, are means of showing respect.

Can students tell the difference between manners and social skills?

FROM "ME" TO "US"

Babies begin to respond to other people from the first hours of life. They like to look at faces and be held in someone's arms. And they quickly learn to charm adults with their smiles, coos and wiggles. Despite their interest in other people, however, they are unaware of others' feelings and needs. From their point of view, everyone and everything exists to satisfy their every wish. From their point of view, when they're wet and hungry, that's all that matters.

Children have to learn to see the point of view of others.

"If a newborn could put his feelings into words, every sentence would start with 'I.'"
— Lois B. Murphy
Ethel M. Leeper
From "I" to "We"

In time, children discover that other people's feelings and needs may conflict with or differ from their own. Although babies expect instant service, they have to learn to wait. Toddlers want everything they see, but they have to learn to respect other people's property. It's hard to hold their own desires in check and consider other people's feelings. Sometimes it's hard for children to understand other children's actions and make their place in a new group.

"Actually, young children often regard toys as an extension of themselves, so that sharing is like giving away part of 'me'."
— David Elkind
A Sympathetic Understanding of the Child: Birth to Sixteen

Note that babies are interested in other people, but egocentric at the same time.

Like Marc Marshall, the 5-year-old boy in *New Kid on the Block*.

Because of their pleasure in being with others and their need to be accepted and loved, however, children learn these lessons. They begin to be able to share, to wait for others, and to express anger in appropriate ways. These lessons may be painful at times, but they have powerful rewards — such as making a new friend or being included in the neighborhood group.

GETTING TO KNOW OTHERS

During the first five years of life, children learn a lot about how to get along with others. Look, for example, at how their increasing social skills are reflected in their play with other children.

Babies enjoy watching, listening and performing for other young children, even though their parents are their main focus.

solitary play

Martha coos to get her brothers' and sisters' attention. She may cry when her twin sister, Harriet, cries. Clearly, Martha can be very aware of other children, though she doesn't actually play with them in the sense of sharing toys and ideas.

Toddlers are very attracted to other toddlers, but they don't usually play with them. They play next to or parallel to them.

parallel play

For instance, Fred, Charlie, Sasha and Kalia may gather in the same corner to pretend to feed their dolls. Occasionally, Sasha glances at Kalia. Suddenly she grabs Kalia's doll blanket. Kalia screams "Mine" and Sasha, surprised, gives it back — this time. It seems as if none of these toddlers really notice each other, but when Kalia decides to play with water in the sink the other children follow. At this point, children's social skills are still very fumbling and awkward. But these attempts are important steps toward learning to play and cooperate with others.

Always giving up one's toys or withdrawing from play is not being socially skillful.

Preschool children are much more able to play together — they share ideas and toys, work out arguments and stay together for a longer period of time.

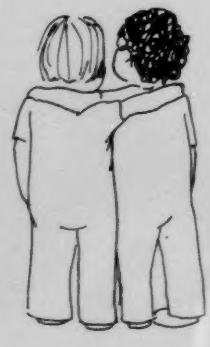
cooperative play

4-year-old Sharon, for instance, has learned to communicate well with others. She asks "What are you playing?" and "Can I play?" when she joins a group of children who are building with blocks. This skill helps her to make many friends and enjoy being with others. Like other preschool children, Sharon doesn't always play with a group of children. Sometimes she plays alone or with one friend. Sometimes she seeks out an adult to talk to. Preschool children are developing skills to deal with various social situations.

This chart summarizes children's growing awareness of other people and the growth in their social skills. Watch how each skill develops.

	BABIES	TODDLERS	PRESCHOOLERS
Showing interest and friendliness towards others	watch, smile and "perform" for familiar people but are fearful of strangers	play alone or next to other children but need to check in on parents occasionally	gradually learn to play with other children and make friends, enjoy meeting new people
Giving and receiving others gracefully	need to receive lots of love before they can give it	give affection, but cannot share easily	learn to understand the idea of sharing and taking turns
Asserting needs and rights in appropriate ways	have no concept of ownership; reach for everything they see	tend to hit, push and poke to get things they want and hold onto what is theirs	begin to use words rather than physical force to get what they want and protect their possessions
Showing consideration and sympathy	think everyone feels the same way they do, but begin to react to different people in different ways	can't take other people's point of view, but begin to try to please and imitate parents	learn to "read" others' feelings, pretend to be other people, and become more considerate of other people
Communicating effectively	"talk" through cries, gestures, and expressions	use words and simple sentences to help them follow rules and routines	increased language helps them express their feelings and ideas and get along with other people

Learning to get along with other people doesn't stop in early childhood. It's a challenge to adults as well as children to become aware of the point of view of others. Both adults and children need to learn how to get along despite personal differences or misunderstandings. Gaining social skills is a life-long process.



EXPANDING THE CHILD'S WORLD

THE WIDENING CIRCLE

Children learn social skills from other people. Their parents are their most important teachers. Parents are first on the scene and most influential for some time:

PARENTS TEACH SOCIAL SKILLS THROUGH THEIR OWN EXAMPLE

Each child watches parents carefully, absorbing how they behave with him or her, with each other, and with friends, relatives and strangers. A child will often imitate just what he or she sees the parents say and do. We are often amused at how faithfully children imitate the conversations of adults in their play.

> *Four-year-old Sandy stood, with her hands on her hips, in front of her doll. "Now enough is ENOUGH," she said sternly. "You can't hit just because you're mad."*

Often children learn more from their parents' example than from their words of wisdom. For instance, when a father listens to his son without interrupting, this sometimes teaches more than his demands to "listen to your mother" or "respect your teacher."

To emphasize the importance of imitation, ask students to remember incidents in which children copied adult ways.

In addition to teaching through their own example, parents can:

GIVE CHILDREN EXPERIENCES WITH DIFFERENT ADULTS AND CHILDREN

Children need to interact with other people to learn to get along with them: parents' advice means little without this real experience. Parents can help, then, by including their children in activities and conversations with other grown-ups. They can also arrange for their children to play with other children on a regular basis. It takes time and effort, but it can be done by inviting neighbors' children into their home, setting up a cooperative play group or taking their children to parks where there are other parents and children.

Social skills need to be practiced in order to become part of us.

Parents can prepare their children for life in our diverse society by introducing them at an early age to people of different ages, cultures, races and nationalities.

How can we prepare children to get along with racially diverse people?

HELP CHILDREN INTERPRET THE WAYS PEOPLE COMMUNICATE WITHOUT USING WORDS

It's hard for children to see someone else's point of view. They need to learn how to "read" other people — their tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and actions. A parent can help by pointing out another person's intentions. "Karl's giving you part of his cookie. He's showing that he likes you." A parent can also encourage a child to make her own observations. There are many opportunities to "read" other people's feelings — in everyday life, or in photographs and drawings in books and magazines.

One good resource on body language for children and adults alike is *The Body Language of Children.* Suzanne Szasz. New York: W.W. Norton, 1978.

TELL CHILDREN HOW THEY SHOULD ACT IN SPECIFIC SITUATIONS AND TELL THEM WHY

Sometimes a child wants to show an interest in another child, but does not know how. For instance, a toddler may not know how rough she is when she greets another child. Her mother helps by saying, "Kathy, you hurt Amy when you push her. Give a hug like this."

Sometimes children need help dealing with difficult situations. Parents can often help preschoolers and older children anticipate difficult situations and plan how they should act. "Troy, when Uncle Junior comes, he'll sleep in your room and you'll sleep in Annie's room. Giving him a night in your room shows we feel he's special." A toddler, however, usually needs help right on the spot when it occurs.

Just as we might teach a child to throw a ball or write a number, so it is important to teach specific social skills.

PRAISE CHILDREN WHEN THEY USE SOCIAL SKILLS

A parent's praise goes a long way. A smile, a hug or a word can mean so much to a child who's struggling to consider other people's wishes as well as his own.

Parents can show children that other people appreciate an act of kindness too. "Aunt Dorinda said that you helped make the beds. That was very thoughtful. I'm very proud of you."

DON'T EXPECT TOO MUCH TOO SOON

Children want to get along with others. Thinking in terms of "us" rather than "me" is hard, however. It's difficult to share a favorite toy all day. And who can wait for a turn on a swing when he doesn't know what "five minutes" means?

Parents, therefore, can't expect a child to be consistent — to remember to share, or wait all the time. Nor can they expect children to talk rather than hit before they learn the words.

Ask students why this is so.

Although parents will experience ups and downs in teaching social skills, they too will enjoy rewards. Hearing that first laugh, receiving that painting all in [illegible] ("I made it for you!"), and watching that child communicate and make friends is a wonderful experience for the parent.

The Nature of Human Nature

Some people who study the evolution of man believe that selfishness is the strongest force in human nature. To them, the world is an arena in which only the strongest survive. The strong protect what's theirs and prey upon the weak. Some of man's most remarkable achievements, such as landing on the moon or the use of nuclear energy, are the result of one group trying to out-do the other, according to this point of view. War and competition, then, are a way of life for humankind.

According to this view, social skills protect man from himself. The parent's job is to train children to control their selfish instincts and mold them, as far as humanly possible, into social beings.

Others disagree. They believe that people are basically cooperative at heart. They point out that our species would not have survived if man's strongest drive had been to kill and take for himself. The progress we have made — in space, technology, medicine and food production — has come about because men and women have worked together. We've struggled to control the environment, not to destroy each other.

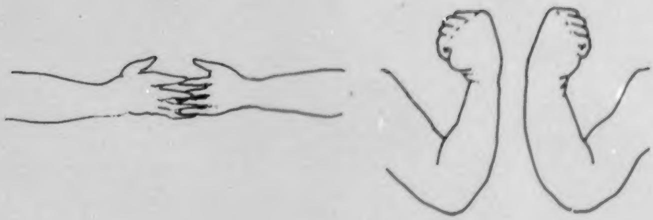
According to this view, social skills are built upon people's natural desire to get along. The parent's job is to help children discover how to mesh their needs with others'.

Ask students.

What do you think?

For centuries people have debated this question. The debate will probably go on as long as mankind lasts.

Whether or not people are motivated by selfishness or unselfishness, hate and anger or love and compassion, these are deep-seated emotions. Social skills enable us to express these feelings and get along with other people.



Characters:

Ted Marshall — *a young father*
Sandy Marshall — *Ted's wife*
Marc — *their 5-year-old son*
Portia — *Marc's 3-year-old sister*
Mavis Herlihy — *a neighbor*
Elise Herlihy — *Mavis' daughter*
Jeanette and Randy Bradshaw — *neighbors*
Other neighbors and their children

Documentary:

Parents talk about the development of social skills in their children and why they think that it's important to develop these skills. Children are shown expressing the skills of sharing, empathy, and assertion.

What ways do the parents in the film use to teach their children social skills?

FILM REVIEW SECTION

New Kid on the Block

The Marshall family — Ted, Sandy, Marc, and Portia — move into a renovated townhouse in an old city neighborhood. When they move in they do not feel welcome. Marc feels left out and insecure with the children on the block because they play a game called "the dozens" that he doesn't know or understand. Sandy finds that her neighbor, Mavis Herlihy, avoids her in the store. And none of the men on the block speak to Ted on his way home from work.

Finally, things change. Portia makes friends with Elise, Mavis' daughter. Sandy invites the unfriendly Mavis in for coffee and gets to know her. From Mavis, Sandy and Ted learn that neighbors are hostile to them because they fear that the Marshalls are speculators. Then, Ted clears up the misunderstanding and Marc joins the children as they play "the dozens."

WHAT SOCIAL SKILLS DID EACH MEMBER OF THE MARSHALL FAMILY USE TO GAIN ACCEPTANCE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

You might point out that each member of the Marshall family has exceptional social skills. This is fortunate, for they face an unusually difficult situation.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

Why are the neighbors hostile to the Marshall family?

- Does such hostility seem realistic? Are misunderstandings like these common? How do they happen?
- Why is Mavis particularly hostile? Is her hostility due to racial prejudice? To economic or social differences?
- Are the children in the neighborhood hostile? Or are they treating Marc the way they would treat any new child?
- What social patterns are the neighborhood children learning from their parents?

Comments: Ted and Sandy learn that the neighbors fear they will be pushed out of the neighborhood by the Marshalls and others who are buying up the homes they are renting. Perhaps the neighborhood children are not hostile towards Marc, but unaccepting of him until he proves that he can be one of them. The children may also be affected by their parents' hostility.

What social skills do Marc and Portia need in this new situation?

- Do Ted and Sandy put them in a situation that's too hard for them to handle?
- How do Marc and Portia deal with the situation? What do they learn?
- Why is Portia more successful in making friends than Marc?
- How can parents become aware of the social pressures their children are facing?

Comments: Moving into a new neighborhood forces Marc and Portia to apply their social skills to a challenge. They need to learn such things as:

- how to stand up for oneself in a new group of people
- to accept differences in children's ways
- that it takes time to establish oneself in a new group of people
- that different groups of people don't always act or react in the same way.

Both children are quite socially skillful for children their age.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
PERKING UP THE PERKINS

This activity focuses on some situations that arise in the Perkins family. Mel and Ann Perkins have three children — Mark (10 months), Tommy (2½) and Troy (4). Mel and Ann need advice for the following situations:

Situation #1

Company comes for lunch. The Morgans bring their two small children to the Perkins' house. After lunch, all the children head for the toys . . .

- Based on the chart on page 5, how would you expect each Perkins child to react when his toy is picked up by one of the Morgan children?
- What can Ann and Mel do to teach their children to share?
- How can Mel and Ann prepare for the next visit so that there are fewer sharing problems?

Situation #2

Mel Perkins' father, whom the children have never met, is coming for Thanksgiving.

- Based on the chart on page 5, how would you expect Mark, Tommy and Troy to react when they first see their grandfather? How might Mel and Ann prepare their children so that they show an interest in their grandfather when he arrives? What are some ways the children can show their grandfather that they are glad to meet him? What can the parents do to help the children use these social skills?

Situation #3

The Perkins and their friends have started a play group to help their children learn how to get along with others. Ann and Mel notice that one child in the play group tends to grab other children's toys and that each of their children needs to learn how to protect his possessions. Mark cries, and both Tommy and Troy hit when the child grabs their toys.

- Based on the chart on page 5, do you think that each Perkins child reacts in typical ways for a child in his age group?
- What can Mel and Ann do to help each child protect his possessions in appropriate ways?

Situation #4

Ann Perkins' best friend has come over to their house before leaving for a 2-year stay in Germany. She and Ann have a lot to say to each other, but talking seems to be impossible. The baby creeps into places where he gets stuck and picks this time to explore the contents of Ann's pocketbook. Tommy and Troy keep pulling on their mother's sweater and interrupting.

Based on the chart on page 5, what consideration do you think Ann should expect from each of her children?

What could she do to help them to be more considerate of her and her friend?

activity #2
A SKILLFUL DESCRIPTION

Think of a person who you feel is socially skilled. Write down at least 7 skills that person uses. Does that person exhibit all of these skills at one time? Does the person exhibit different skills with different people and situations?

Is a socially skillful person always "pleasant" or "self-effacing"?

activity #3
IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING

Write a short paragraph about the difference between manners and social skills. Create a chart with at least 7 manners on one side and the social skills that they reflect on the other. Two examples appear below.

Manners	**Social Skills**
Saying "thank you"	Showing consideration and appreciation
Holding the door for another person	Showing thoughtfulness and respect

Two other examples of how the list might be completed are:

• Chewing with your mouth closed	• Showing consideration and appreciation for others
• Waiting to eat until the hostess starts	• Showing consideration for others.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Observe a group of young children playing in a day care center, nursery school, Head Start center, your home or your neighborhood. Watch 2 or 3 children playing near one another for at least 30 minutes and keep a record of:

   what social skills the children have (give examples);
   what social skills they still need to learn;
   what the adults in the room are doing to help these children learn new skills; and
   how the choice of materials and their arrangements affect the way children interact with one another.

2. Many young children watch and learn from T.V. Watch "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" and "Sesame Street" yourself and take notes to answer these questions:

   Which social skills do children learn from each program?
   Do you notice any difference in the way these lessons are taught?

   Present your findings to the class.
3. Role play one of the following situations with some of your friends:

   getting to know a person of the opposite sex;
   interviewing for a job;
   convincing your parents that you can travel alone to a foreign country;
   talking to a very conservative person who disagrees with almost everything you say.

   Role play the situation in front of the class and ask them to look for the social skills you used.
4. Invite an anthropology professor or graduate student from a local university or college to speak about the social attitudes and manners that are taught to children in different societies in the world.
5. Using an art form such as dance, art, music or photography, create 3 works that express your ideas about why people sometimes don't get along with other people.

to discuss

1. Try to remember how you were taught social skills. What was effective? What wasn't effective? Why?
2. What are some social skills that a child needs in order to get along in school? What kinds of skills does a child who lives in your neighborhood need? How are these skills similar or different from the skills a child needs for school?

How do young children adapt to situations which place very difficult demands on them?

3. Children of all cultures learn ways of getting along with other people. Often different actions express the same social skill. For example, some Japanese children are taught to bow to a passing adult, while many Anglo American children may be taught to stand up while adults pass.
   What are some ways we show respect and friendliness in our culture? Do the ways we express these feelings differ even within our society?
4. What can parents do to help their children understand and get along with people from different economic groups, races, cultures or nations?

to research

1. How children are taught to share and cooperate at an early age in the Israeli kibbutz.

Several new films on growing up in the kibbutz are available for rental from Campus Film Distributors, 2 Overhill Road, Scarsdale, N.Y. 10583

2. History of manners — how they change through the years.
3. The emphasis placed on cooperation and competition in US and USSR, according to Urie Bronfenbrenner. (See Urie Bronfenbrenner's book *Two Worlds of Childhood: US and USSR.*)

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . the growth of social skills

The Child Under Six. James L. Hymes, Jr. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 2nd ed., 1974.

Guiding Young Children. Verna Hildebrand. New York: Macmillan, 1975.

Raising Children in a Difficult Time. Benjamin Spock. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1974.

The Roots of Caring, Sharing and Helping. Paul Mussen and Nancy Eisenberg-Berg. San Francisco: Freeman Paperback, 1977.

Also: *From "I" to "We"* and *Language is for Communication.* Caring for Children Series, Nos. 8 and 10. Lois B. Murphy and Ethel Leeper. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

. . .understanding people in different cultures

Children of Six Cultures. Beatrice B. Whiting. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1963.

The Two Worlds of Childhood U.S. and U.S.S.R. Urie Bronfenbrenner. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970. (paperback)

. . .the evolution and nature of man

African Genesis. Robert Ardrey. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1961. (paperback)

Origins. Richard E. Leakey and Roger Lewin. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1977.

GROWING UP: CHILDREN DO THEIR BEST

The Scratching Pole

TO BEGIN...

Children want to grow up. They work as hard and as wisely at life's tasks as they know how at the time.

This news may come as a surprise to parents, however. For many of children's behaviors are not easy to understand or live with. If parents look more carefully at what their children are trying to do, they may see that they and their children want the same thing — for the children to grow up.

To introduce the concept of developmental tasks, you might display photographs of people of different ages engaged in activities and ask students to list the tasks they think belong to growing and maturing.

FROM THE EDITORS

Why is my child acting this way?

This is a question many parents ask. It's a valuable one. If parents respond only to the child's behavior without interpreting it, they may decide that their child is deliberately misbehaving. If, however, parents focus on what their child is trying to accomplish, they can be more tolerant and helpful to their child.

In this booklet, you will learn about the concept of developmental tasks. You'll gain practice interpreting children's behaviors in terms of developmental tasks. You'll also read about ways parents can build upon their children's desire to grow up.

THE BIG IDEAS

- Children work at life's tasks as hard and as wisely as they know how.
- At times, their "best efforts" at growing up are not easy for parents to live with.
- By recognizing the life tasks their children are trying to accomplish, parents can be more supportive of their children's growth.

a BURST of efforts

My baby, Sharon, refuses to let me feed her any more. She grabs the spoon from me and tries to bring it to her mouth. Of course, she spills half of its contents.

Bobbie, my 3-year-old, keeps trying to help me fix breakfast. He insists on pouring the juice and spreading the butter though he's just learning how. So when he "helps," I just have more puddles of juice and crumbs from the toast to clean up.

There are times when parents just don't understand their children. They lose patience, even their sense of humor.

But if parents take a closer look at the things that children do, they'll see that children are really trying to tackle the tasks of growing up. And they're doing the best they know how.

THE AIM'S THE SAME

Parents want their children to learn and grow — and that's exactly what they're trying to do. They don't have to be pushed and prodded. They are born with the urge to move forward. Normal development compels them to work on **Developmental Tasks** — to:

At times we refer to these tasks as life tasks.

gain control over their bodies
communicate with others
get along with other people
become independent
learn who they are and who they can become
think and solve problems
form values and beliefs.

Compare these growth tasks with Erikson's stages of personality development. See the unit on *Identity*.

They can't, however, master these tasks in a day. There are certain things to learn and appropriate ways to act at each age — whether it's 2, 12 or 22. Each step forward builds on the ones before. Children hold their heads up before they sit, cry before they talk, hoard things before they share them.

There are 6 universal laws about human growth.

1. The child wants to grow.
2. Growth has direction.
3. Growth has order.
4. Each child is an indiviual.
5. Growth is indivisible.
6. Growth is uneven.

For more information consult *The Child Under Six* by James Hymes, Jr.

Help students note that children become progressively more social. They go through stages of "hoarding", for example, before they learn skills such as sharing.

In simplest terms, a developmental task is "doing what comes naturally." When the child is ready to attack a new set of learnings, nothing short of heroic measures can stop him.

A **Developmental Task** is a task that arises during a certain period of a person's life. Accomplishing the task makes the individual confident and able to go on to more difficult tasks.

There are human tasks that everyone works on so they can survive in the world. Everyone tries to control his body, become independent, think and solve problems, for example.

Some tasks are shaped and altered by the culture in which we live. In our culture, for example, learning to think involves understanding symbols such as alphabet letters, road signs, and numerals. If we had been born when our country was a wilderness, understanding animal footprints might have been a developmental task, too.

Tasks are also shaped by each person's needs, values and aspirations. Because of a hearing loss, a child may learn sign language and lip reading in addition to other symbols. Another child, who's interested in music, may learn to read musical notation.

Though everyone works at life's tasks, the urge to grow and change seems strongest in children. They approach these tasks with zest and ingenuity. Somehow they find a way to work at them at any time and any place. Three-year-old Bobby can't be stopped. He wants to join the grown-up world. So he imitates every move a grown-up makes. He's in the kitchen getting breakfast or on the driveway "washing" the car. He waters plants at every chance and wants to sit in grown-up chairs.

GROWING PAINS

Sometimes the ways children go about working at these tasks are not easy to live with. Learning involves trial and error. In learning to get along with others, for instance, children test people out. They pinch and tease as well as smile and hug. In trying to be independent, children go overboard. They may say "no" to everything. Squabbles are inevitable. Such conflicts can be annoying, but they're a healthy and important part of learning. They're children's best efforts.

It's hard, too, for children to keep grown-up rules in mind when they're practicing a new skill. Beds look perfect for jumping. Toothpaste asks to be squeezed. Children are just discovering how things work and how much they can do. Children make mistakes, naturally — but at the moment they just don't know there are better ways.

One of the most puzzling aspects of child behavior to parents is the swing from one extreme to another. The push to grow isn't steady; one day we wish to grow up and the next day we want to be a child again. Also, the push to grow is easily dislocated by fatigue, or a new event such as the birth of a new baby in the family. Backsliding is a normal part of forward-going.

INVESTIGATING THE WAYS CHILDREN GROW UP

Sometimes children are a mystery to their parents, for their parents don't interpret their behaviors. Let's pretend, for a minute, that their parents bring these problems to the greatest detectives in the land; Sherlock Help and Dr. Wants-To. Here are some case studies from their files that record the parents' dilemmas and the detectives' startling discoveries:

CASE NO. 1

Sherlock Help and Dr. Wants To were just finishing their last scones at home on 962 Wayne Street when a telegram was delivered. It read:

> **NEED HELP FAST. DAUGHTER WON'T LIE DOWN IN CRIB THOUGH VERY TIRED. PLEASE INVESTIGATE. IDA KNOW.**

Pocketing the telegram, they set out for Ida's home. When they arrived, Ida was pacing back and forth. And sure enough, her daughter stood up when Ida began to feed her.

"Madam, when did this begin?" Wants To asked.

"Just a week or two ago," she answered fretfully, as she took the baby out of the high chair and put her on the rug.

"Did you notice anything extraordinary that could have brought it on?" Wants-To probed.

"Not really," Ida announced.

Wants-To continued to question her. All this time Sherlock Help said nothing. Finally, he spoke. "What do you think it is?" he asked Wants To.

"Well," Wants To ventured, "certainly this baby has begun to change."

"Very perceptive of you, Wants-To," Help commented.

"It's entirely possible that the baby in question has developed an acute case of gas and needs to stretch every other minute."

"Nonsense," Help bellowed. "Haven't you noticed that while you were talking to Ida, her baby was using every opportunity to stand up? The child did not look uncomfortable. On the contrary, my dear Wants-To, she looked ecstatic when she managed to stand."

Some pediatricians suggest putting the baby to bed standing up during this exuberant stage of mastering the upright position. When completely exhausted, the baby will lie down — and only then.

"Madam," he continued, "my hunch is that your baby is working hard to control her body. Learning to stand and walk is a very exciting and important developmental task for a 10-month-old. So she practices it in every situation — in her crib, high chair, and even when she's on the table and her diapers are being changed."

"Brilliant idea, Help," Wants-To exclaimed.

"Just natural deduction, Wants-To."

"Oh," sighed Ida, "Then there is nothing to worry about."

"Not a thing," Help said as he adjusted his cap. "Come along, Wants To. This case is closed."

CASE NO. 2

At 4:35 on November 10, a woman wrapped in a shawl appeared at 962 Wayne Street. "My name is Donna Leddit Beknown," she said. "And I have come to you in secret. You see, I keep discovering my husband's ties, shoes and hats in strange places. Finally I found a suspect — Martin, my 3-year-old son. I told him not to take his father's clothes. I tried to interest him in other things. Nothing worked. He said he was being 'Daddy'."

"Madam, will you have some tea and crumpets? Pray, sit down," Help said most gallantly. The woman, however, would not eat a morsel.

Help began. "This case is perfectly clear, my dear. In fact, you have almost solved it yourself."

"I have?" Donna said.

"Yes, you have watched your son and tried to find out from him what he was trying to do. Your son, I suspect, is trying to discover who he is and who he can become. He's noticed that men in our culture have different roles — father, husband, worker. And he's trying out the role of father. Why feel embarrassed about his pretending? This is his way of learning what it means to be a man in our present day culture."

Little boys often have very unclear ideas about what men do "at work" or "in the shop."

The woman suddenly glanced at her watch and got up to go. "Thank you so much. Not a word to anyone, though. This must be TOP SECRET."

They assured her the truth would stay hidden with them. And she fled into the dark of the night.

CASE NO. 3

It was Tea Time, December 12, when Mr. Ken Fused, one of their regular clients, and his 2-year-old son, Art, were ushered into the library. Ken appeared very nervous. Wants-To offered him a muffin and began to talk about the weather, a most consoling subject.

Sherlock Help said nothing, however. Finally, he spoke. "Ken, old chap, I can see that you have a problem. Your home is in an uproar. You can't find anything you own. Pans are out of cupboards. Clothes are out of drawers. Your briefcase and your wife's pocketbook have been ransacked."

"How did you know?" said Ken in surprise, checking his briefcase to make sure it was still there.

"Elementary. I observe and I take a close look at what I see," said Help, popping a muffin into the 2-year-old's mouth and sitting him in a chair. "You see, out of the corner of my eye, I spotted young Art here as he reached for the drawer of my desk. He picked out the pens and dropped them on the floor. He emptied *my* briefcase over there in the corner. And he was heading for my tobacco pouch when I popped this muffin in his mouth. So this is the culprit who has been into everything in your house. I'm surprised you have not noticed, Mr. Fused."

"Is there anything wrong with him, Help?" Ken asked, looking at Art through new eyes.

"Not at all. Your son has the normal and healthy behavior of a 2-year-old. Children are very resourceful. Somehow they find a way to practice developmental tasks at any time and any place. Art's curiosity can't be stopped. He'll empty anything he can find. Exploring each container, he gains coordination. He learns about sizes and shapes, too."

Ask students to think of different ways they've seen a child work on the same task.

"Help," Ken said, "you amaze me. How did you know that Art is learning about shapes and sizes?"

"Simple," Help replied. "I just watched Art carefully and deduced what he was up to."

BEYOND THE SYMPTOM . . .

As you can see, growing up really is hard to do. Each of the developmental tasks takes time to learn. Parents can ease the way, though.

PARENTS CAN LOOK BEHIND CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORS AND TRY TO DISCOVER WHAT LIFE TASKS THEY ARE WORKING ON.

Observe their behaviors carefully and try to interpret them. A baby who pulls your hair, for instance, is probably not trying to hurt you. Touching other people helps her understand that she is physically separate from other people. It's the way she works on the developmental task of becoming independent from parents and other adults.

IF THERE'S A BETTER WAY TO ACCOMPLISH A TASK, PARENTS CAN HELP CHILDREN FIND IT.

Recognize children's needs, but help them find an easier or more acceptable way to accomplish a task if possible. Help them, for instance, see that there are other ways to settle disagreements besides pinching and teasing. Sit down with them. Ask them to think of alternatives. They could take turns — or plan to do something that two can do together. By doing this, you are helping them to accomplish what they are really trying to learn — to get along with other people.

Very few grade school children still suck from a bottle, wear diapers, or carry security blankets. Time takes care of many things.

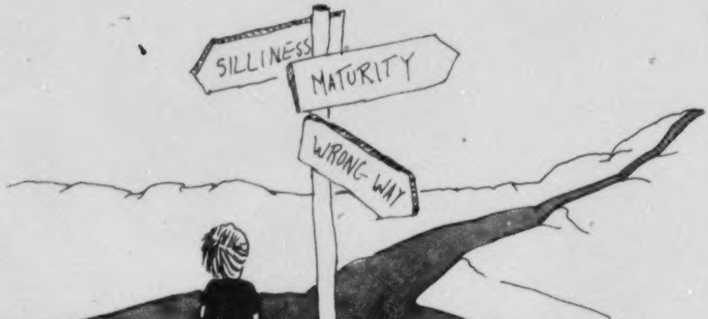
IF THERE'S NO BETTER WAY, TRY TO LIVE WITH THE BEHAVIOR. MANY TIMES IT WILL BE OUTGROWN.

Sometimes when you understand a behavior it doesn't seem as irritating. For example, you can be more patient with a toddler's endless questions if you know that this is the way a child his age learns new words and takes part in a conversation. Sometimes you can help children find other ways to practice tasks: allowing your child to jump on an old tire in the backyard can meet his need to practice jumping — and it can save your living room sofa!

Other times, though, you may just have to be patient while your child masters a task such as learning to tell the difference between a stranger and a friend. For a while, the baby may cry at the sight of any stranger — even a grandmother who visits now and then. At such times it helps to remember that children do grow up and become easier to live with.

In the meantime, children are just doing their best.

Parents, then, can act as guides. The road to maturity is all mapped out. Parents build upon their children's natural desires to grow up. From time to time parents help by pointing out the way or getting children over a difficult spot.



Characters:

Joe Sanchez — *a young father*
Maggie Sanchez — *Joe's wife*
Christina — *their 4-year-old daughter*
Cindy — *Maggie's sister*
Tio Daniel — *Maggie's uncle*
Ed — *Joe's partner*
Billy Gumdrop — *Vagrant arrested by Joe*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

The Scratching Pole

Joe Sanchez tries very hard to get a promotion into another police division where there will be more overtime work. He studies and works hard on controlling his temper. He tries to take on difficult assignments such as dealing with a prejudiced drunken man. Some of his efforts are more successful than others.

Christina also works hard developing skills. She constantly practices throwing a ball inside as well as outside of the house — which causes some problems.

Unfortunately, Joe does not appreciate Christina's efforts. He stops her from throwing the ball and, at one point, even puts the ball out of reach. Several events help him to understand why Christina was playing with the ball so much. For example, he sees the scratching pole that Tio Daniel made for the kitten so that it could practice scratching the post rather than the furniture.

WHAT LESSON DOES THE SCRATCHING POLE TEACH JOE ABOUT CHRISTINA'S ACTIONS?

Documentary:

Dr. James L. Hymes, Jr. discusses the concept that children work on the tasks of growing up in the best ways that they know. He assures parents that many behaviors which are puzzling to them or appear to be without purpose are actually children's attempts at growing up.

Have the students discuss what life tasks the children in the documentary appear to be working on.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

What developmental tasks were being worked on in the show?

- What signs were there that a task was being worked on?
- Do any of the people working on a task seem to accomplish their goal?

Comments: In this program there are three examples of a developmental task being worked on. First of all, Christina is working on gross motor coordination as she practices with her ball. Joe is also working on a developmental task — that of learning to control his emotions. Finally, the kitten is working on a task as well, learning to control and use his claws. Each of these characters has a lesson to learn as they strive to achieve their goal. At the end of the program, despite some rocky times, all appear to be progressing toward mastery of their task.

How could Christina's parents have known that she was working on a developmental task and not misbehaving?

- What are the signs that a child (or adult) is working on a task?
- Did Maggie and Joe try to figure out why Christina was acting this way?
- What other activities (besides throwing a ball) helped Christina improve her motor skills?

Comments: Maggie and Joe were puzzled by Christina's behavior, but they did not try to analyze it. Instead, they ascribed it to such things as misbehavior or the fact that Christina was spoiled. If Maggie and Joe had observed her behavior, they would have seen the almost compulsive nature of it. At every opportunity Christina was playing with her ball, reaching for objects, and even drawing with her crayons. Joe and Maggie would have been less anxious about what Christina was doing if they had taken the time to observe and analyze her behavior.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
NOW AND THEN

We work at developmental tasks throughout our lives. What task or tasks are you working particularly hard on at this point in your life?

High school students often rework the tasks of the preschool years in more mature form. For example, the preschool child works at letting the parent go — while the adolescent seeks ways to establish himself independently through a career or marriage.

Look back on the tasks you were working on 5 years ago. What were some of the ways you tried to accomplish those tasks? Would you have done anything differently if you knew then what you know now?

activity #2
MAKE A BRILLIANT DEDUCTION

Dr. Wants-To is trying to develop a master chart that shows all the discoveries he and Sherlock Help have made in the past decade.

Try to finish the chart below by adding developmental tasks to the column on the right.

Babies

When babies	*This may help them*	*To master this lifelong task*
• Study faces, pull hair, poke, grab your glasses and earrings	• See themselves as physically separate from other people	• Become independent
• First, cry for every want; later, babble, smile, wave arms and kick legs as well	• Express themselves in many ways	•
• Wake up during the night	• Adjust to the family schedule of sleeping, waking, eating	•

These are probable answers:

- Communicate with others
- Get along with others

Probable answers:

- Gain control over their bodies
- Communicate with others
- Learn who they are and who they can become

Toddlers

When toddlers	*This may help them*	*To master this lifelong task*
• Are constantly in motion: emptying drawers and pocketbooks, jumping on sofas and beds	• Develop large and small muscle control	•
• Ask questions such as "What's that?" endlessly	• Learn words and get attention	•
• "Get into" parents' razors, shoes, lipstick, and wallets, and copy parents' actions	• Learn what it means to be a grown up	•

Preschoolers

When preschoolers	*This may help them*	*To master this lifelong task*
• Hit, threaten, call names, take toys and exclude other children	• Play with others, yet get their own way	•
• Use up all the tape; staple anything in sight	• Use tools and equipment by themselves	•
• Make forts and houses with household furniture, blankets or pillows	• Use and interpret symbols that stand for real objects, events or people	•

- Get along with others
- Become independent
- Think & solve problems

activity #3
APPLYING THE SOLUTIONS

Now that you've helped Dr. Wants-To finish his master developmental chart (see Activity #2), help him figure out what to say next. His clients keep asking him how they should respond when their children do the same things as the babies, toddlers, and preschoolers listed in the chart. Suggest how a parent might respond in each case.

For example, for the behavior:

- *Study faces, pull hair, poke, grab your glasses and earrings,*

students might suggest that parents:

- *Recognize the task of becoming independent and show children how to touch hair without pulling it.*

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Visit a toddler or preschool classroom in a day care center, Head Start center, nursery school or parent cooperative. Observe a child for one hour during a time that the child chooses his or her own activities (outside or inside). Take notes on

   one developmental task that you think the child is working on
   some ways this child tries to accomplish the task
   the child's problems accomplishing the task
   what adults do to help the child; what else they could do
   the effect that the classroom arrangement or outdoor space has on the child's ability to work on the task.

See also how a child continues to work at this task regardless of the time of day or location, i.e., indoors or out.

2. Talk to your own or other parents and grandparents. Explain the concept of developmental tasks. Then ask them to talk about the tasks that an adult their age works on. Take notes while they talk. Write a short paper on your findings.

   Try to decide if life tasks change or remain the same as you grow older. Do you think you will be concentrating on the same tasks as your parents when you are their age?
3. Interview a few parents in your neighborhood. Ask them to describe their children's behaviors that are puzzling them. After you have descriptions of 5 behaviors, try to figure out what developmental tasks their children are working on.

to discuss

1. Do developmental tasks differ for males and females in our country?
2. Discuss how the following statement relates to the concept of developmental tasks:

   > "You don't grow frogs quicker by cutting off tadpoles' tails."
   > — Howard Lane
3. What problems may result if parents respond only to their children's behaviors rather than the developmental tasks behind them?
4. "Learning involves trial and error." What are some of the trial and error attempts that you can expect from a young child working on a developmental task?

to research

1. "There are certain things to learn and appropriate ways to act at each age — whether it's 2, 12 or 22." Choose one year between birth and 5 and find out the major developmental tasks the child works on and the child's abilities at that age.
2. Read a book about pioneer life in the United States. How did those times and circumstances shape the developmental tasks for a man or a woman?
3. How the concept of developmental tasks originated (see *Developmental Tasks and Education*. Robert Havighurst. New York: Longmans, originally published in 1948).
4. How developmental tasks vary among cultures.

National Geographic often carries articles on various cultural groups.

See also Margaret Mead's earlier books on Samoa and New Guinea.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . developmental tasks children are working on

The Child Under Six. James L. Hymes, Jr. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co. 2nd ed., 1974.

Infants and Mothers. T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1969. (paperback)

The Magic Years. Selma Fraiberg. New York: Scribner's, 1959. (paperback)

Oneness and Separateness: From Infant to Individual. L. J. Kaplan. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978.

Toddlers and Parents. T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1974. (paperback)

What Every Parent Should Know. Ira Gordon. Chicago: National Center for Child Abuse, 1978.

See also:
A Child's Journey. Julius Segal and Herbert Yahraes. New York: McGraw-Hill. 1978.

. . . developmental tasks parents are working on

The Growth and Development of Mothers. Angela Barron McBride. New York: Harper & Row, 1973. (paperback)

Our Bodies Ourselves. The Boston Women's Health Book Collective, Inc. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1971. (paperback)

Ourselves and Our Children. The Boston Women's Health Book Collective, Inc. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978. (paperback)

Passages. Gail Sheehy. New York: Bantam Books, 1976.

CHILDREN'S FEARS: FACE THEM

Hairy Scary

TO BEGIN...

The capacity to feel fear is born into human beings. Caution in the face of unfamiliar or threatening events contributes to survival. In fact, the fearless person either doesn't know better or is defying reality for one reason or another. While we don't want children to have unrealistic fears, eliminating all fears in children is not the goal of parents. Instead, parents need to remove the effects of fear that interfere with the child's ability to deal with life in a constructive way.

You might begin this unit by asking students to share some fears or nightmares they had as children.

FROM THE EDITORS

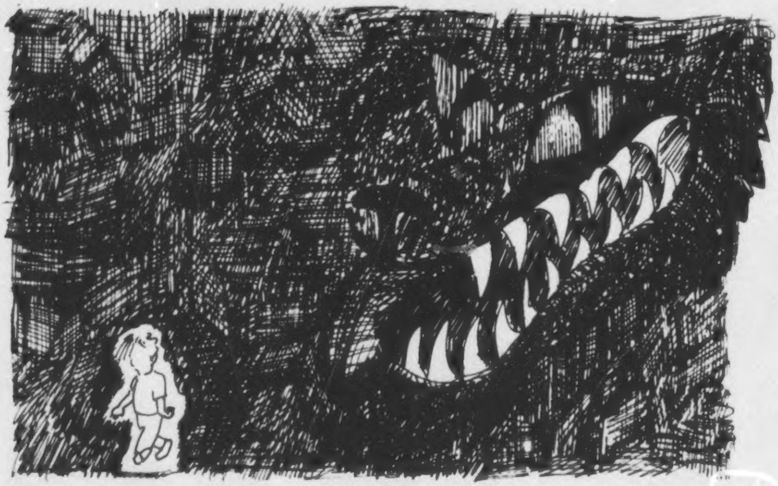
Every child has fears at one time or another. It's a good thing, too, for fear plays an important role in life. Without fear, a child could get hurt. Fears help a child to be cautious, to approach a strange dog or cross a street with care.

Yet we do not want children to become so fearful that they live in fear. We don't want them to avoid all dogs or streets because they could be dangerous. We don't want them to doubt their abilities to deal with new situations.

This booklet describes some of the fears that young children have. It suggests reasons why children become afraid and ways their parents can help them face and overcome these fears.

THE BIG IDEAS

- Fears are a normal part of growing up.
- Some childhood fears are caused by actual objects or events; others are imaginary. Both kinds are real to the child.
- Parents help their children cope with fears by accepting them as real and helping children find ways to face them.



deep inside,
in that silent place
where a child's fears crouch . . .

— Lillian Smith

FEARS:
Through the Child's Eyes

And sometimes in my bunk bed I start thinking,
maybe a fiend sneaked into my lower bunk.
And he's sniffing around for a boy to eat,
and I'm the boy that he's sniffing, and . .

—Judith Viorst
My Mama Says There Aren't Any Zombies, Ghosts, Vampires, Creatures, Demons, Monsters, Fiends, Goblins, or Things
(New York: Atheneum, 1977)

The world can be a scary place for young children.

Things that seem perfectly safe to us look dangerous and harmful to small children. Their fears may seem ridiculous to us, but they are dreadfully real to children.

Try to see the world through a child's eyes and you can understand why some situations are frightening and why all children are afraid now and then.

> "'. . . Oh, to recapture the joys of childhood!'
>
> In one form or another, that refrain is often heard from those engulfed in stress. The truth is, however, that childhood as a period of undiluted pleasure is a fiction concocted by adults who have chosen to forget. . . the days and nights of all children. . . touched by pain and anxiety, fear and bewilderment, wants unfulfilled, needs unmet."
>
> — Julius Segal
> and Herbert Yahraes
> *A Child's Journey*

A FEARSOME BEGINNING

During the first three years, life brings one surprise after another:

To a newborn baby, everything is new, and perhaps a bit uncertain.

Imagine how it must feel to have your hair washed for the first time. Just think how startling the roar of the vacuum cleaner or the barking of a dog must sound to a baby.

Babies work hard at making sense of these new experiences. They learn to recognize certain places, special people, typical sounds and regular happenings. When things happen in the usual way, they feel safe and secure. They adjust to dogs, bells and buzzers in their own home.

When the pattern changes, however, they are undone. Unfamiliar people and new situations can be very upsetting. Even familiar people may confuse a baby by changing their appearance:

I went to get Benjy up, as usual. When I changed his diapers, he was just as cheerful and full of smiles as he could be. I carried him to the bathroom to see his Dad, who'd just lathered up and started to shave. Then, the strangest thing happened. Benjy took one look at his father and became absolutely terrified. He clutched me, screamed and hid his face against me. At breakfast he gurgled and smiled at his father again. I just don't know what to make of it.

A child's own father becomes a monster when shaving cream covers his face. Even Mother can become a stranger in a new hat. They appear this way because babies — even preschoolers — tend to pay attention to only one aspect of an object or a person at a time. A child's way of thinking is often so different from an adult's that it's terribly confusing.

AWARE AND WARY

Toddlers are much more aware of the world around them, but they're still a bit wary about things we take for granted:

> Toddlers are just beginning to sense their size and limitations. They realize that they can get hurt.

And they try to protect themselves from the dangers that they see befalling others — both living and non-living things.

Piaget describes the way a child perceives the world as "egocentric" and "animistic." The child is unable to take the point of view of another and attributes life to anything that moves.

It's hard for them to judge whether they are safe. They see dog food being eaten by the dog. Will he eat them? They see the toilet swallow the toilet paper. Will they be swallowed too? They watch the vacuum cleaner suck up dirt. Will it eat them up too? Even the most ordinary experiences can hold a certain kind of terror:

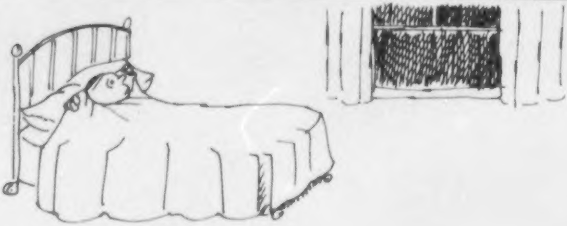
At first, my daughter Bonnie loved the beauty parlor. She twirled the chairs, looked in the mirror and charmed everyone. When her turn came and she saw the scissors, however, her eyes grew big with fear. As the scissors snipped and her hair fell on the floor, she began to panic.

IMAGINING THE WORST

Preschool children are apt to develop a new set of fears:

> By age three or so, children are comfortable with "what is," but they worry about what "could happen."

The other night when I went in to check on Danny, I found him wide awake. He looked exhausted, but as if he were fighting sleep. And he pulled the sheet over his head so all I could see was his face! When I asked him why, he said he was afraid a bee would fly in and sting him.



These children are just beginning to use their imaginations. Because of this, they become afraid of many things they once accepted calmly. It is difficult for them to separate what is real from what is imagined. They imagine dangers such as ghosts, robbers, monsters and wild beasts. They anticipate disasters such as accidents, wars or death.

In their imaginations preschoolers create a magical world. They invent rigid rules to stay unharmed. They want you to tuck in their sheets so monster mice can't eat them, or put a bandaid on a scratch to stop the blood from "leaking" out. If they say they hate you and are "going to kill you dead," they may worry later that you will die.

These rules are like our own superstititions. What magical beliefs are still (half-heartedly) observed by your students?

- the number 13?
- walking under a ladder?
- not stepping on sidewalk cracks?
- avoiding black cats?

All of a sudden, a child may become afraid of the dark and troubled by nightmares. For the first time, a child may worry about something "happening" to his or her body.

Gregg and I were talking about the things we were afraid of when we were children. He couldn't believe my fears.

I remember spitting watermelon seeds out back with my best friend. We had contests seeing who could spit the farthest. Then it happened. I swallowed a watermelon seed and it went down inside me. I coughed, but it didn't come out. Sonjie said a watermelon tree would grow inside. I was terrified to eat after that, because I thought the food would make the watermelon tree grow.

Most children have fears some time during their early years. The way they learn to cope with these fears makes a big difference. It determines how much control fear has over a child and how much control the child has over himself.

Courage is a word usually associated with adults, but it is often an unrecognized part of the child's everyday life. Since she has to learn almost everything, the child is constantly confronted with challenges that call for courage. It takes courage to learn to let go in a swimming pool, to ride a two-wheel bicycle, to face a doctor's needle.

FEARS:

Combating Them Together

Children have different ways of overcoming their fears.

Some children need to learn all about the situations they fear.

It helps to take a special trip to the dentist's office, climb up in the chair, and touch a few of the tools that the dentist will put in their mouths. Observing and reading about the new guinea pig may convince them that he isn't dangerous and he won't hurt.

Some children need to control the frightening objects or situations themselves.

When they turn the vacuum cleaner on and off or flush the toilet themselves, their fear may go away. When they turn the light switch on, the room seems less scary.

Permitting the child to decide if a small light in the room at night should be on or off gives a feeling of control to the child.

Still other children use their imaginations to combat fear.

Pretending to bark and act like a dog can help these children overcome a fear of dogs. Pretending to hunt lions and lock them in a closet may make them feel safe enough to go to sleep.

And, of course, it always helps to share a fear with a parent.

It feels [illegible]d to talk about a scary event. Talking lets the fear out. Talking together brings a feeling of safety in.

A FRIEND IN FEAR

To a child, grown-ups have a magic all their own. They can forbid lions to sleep under the bed and send them back to the zoo. They can rescue their child from a nightmare and bring him or her back to earth, bed and safety. The fact is, children believe in their parents. They are impressed by parents' courage and peace of mind in the face of such dangers.

Because children have such faith in their parents, parents can help them express and overcome their fears. But, parents also have the power to intensify their children's fears. The way parents respond when children are afraid is very important: some ways are helpful; others don't help at all.

Fathers may be unwilling to accept the expression of fear from their sons. Girls may have an easier time.

WHEN CHILDREN BECOME AFRAID . . .

DON'T	*DO*
Laugh at children's fears Statements such as "Don't be a sissy — boys aren't afraid of the dark" only shame children and make them doubt their own feelings.	**Accept their fears as real** Acknowledging "Sometimes darkness can be scary — do you want a flashlight?" lets them know its OK to have and to express fears.
Force them into a situation they fear When children are afraid of washing down the drain, making them stay in the tub only intensifies their fear.	**Remove them from the fearful situation, then talk about it** Take children out of the tub, but show them that their toys won't wash down the drain.
Ignore children's fears Telling children that the booster shot won't hurt makes them deal with fears all alone. They may repress and never work out the fear.	**Help them confront fears** Talk about how the shot feels. Pretend to give each other shots. Expressing and acting out fears helps children feel they have some control.

Anesthesiologists have recognized children's fears of being put to sleep (often equated with death) and so many hospitals prepare children for the experience by puppet shows or filmstrips that show what will happen.

Transmit personal fears to children
When a parent is afraid of mice, children sense it. Often they adopt their parents' fears.

Give them chances to watch other people interact confidently with things they fear
Watching another child handle a pet mouse often does more than words to help children lose their fear of mice.

FEARS IN THE NIGHT

Sometimes fears do not surface when people are awake. Fears may be repressed during the day and emerge in nightmares. Although people of all ages have an occasional bad dream, nightmares affect children most. Nightmares seem to peak between the ages of 4 and 6.

Parents in all cultures face the problem of how to help their children who are having nightmares. Most parents hold and comfort their children when they're having a bad dream. They encourage children to talk about it. For example, the Senoi parents in Malaysia encourage their children to share their dreams with the whole family. The family helps the child think of a way to fight the enemies in his dream. They tell the child to fight the tiger who's chasing him. Or, if he dreams he's falling, they tell him to fly.

One American mother whose daughter was being haunted by a scary monster each night finally brought a stick into the daughter's room. "Pretend this is a magic wand," she said. "You wave it and say ***Monsters, be gone***."

There are fears within us all. Parents cannot prevent their children's fears, but they can help them face those fears. Children need an ally.

Daddy in the Dream

I was chased by a gang.
I screamed.

"I'm scared!"
Daddy came and carried me on his back.
Daddy was taller than a mountain.
He was wearing a straw hat.
His shadow covered two or
three mountains.

— Yamaguchi Masayo, 6
From: *There Are Two Lives.*
Richard Lewis and Haruna Kimura. New York:
Simon and Schuster, 1970.

Characters:

Jeannie Sandburg — *a young mother and newspaper reporter*
Amos Sandburg — *a young father and lawyer*
Allison Sandburg — *5½-year-old daughter of Jeannie and Amos*
Christopher Sandburg — *Allison's 3-year-old brother*
John Marston (Bumpo) — *Jeannie's brother*
Sarah Marston — *Jeannie and Bumpo's mother*
Exterminator
Wiley Mason and Benetta Forster — *lawyers with Amos in Iowa*
Ruth — *Jeannie's friend and co-worker*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

Hairy Scary

Allison has suddenly developed a fear of bearded men — the exterminator, a salesman and even her adored Uncle Bumpo. Jeannie and Amos don't understand where this fear has come from. They try as best they can, however, to help Allison overcome it. For example, Jeannie tells Allison not to be afraid. She tries to get Bumpo to stay for dinner so that Allison can get used to his beard. She talks to Allison about the fear. She asks Bumpo to shave. Finally, when Amos arrives home from a business trip, he brings a fake beard for Allison and Chris to play with. By the end of the film it seems as if Allison has finally overcome her fear of beards.

WHAT DO YOU THINK HELPED ALLISON MOST?

Documentary:

Dr. James L. Hymes, Jr. discusses the origins of children's fears and provides parents with some ideas on how to comfort their children and help them overcome their fears.

Have the students discuss how parents might apply Dr. Hymes' advice to fearful situations for children, such as the little boy getting his hair cut.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

How do you think Allison developed her fear?

- How do children develop fears? Do they always have a cause?
- Is it important for Jeannie and Amos to know the cause of Allison's fear? Why or why not?
- How do you make your child feel comfortable and trusting enough to ask for help in coping with fear?

Comments:
No one really knows why Allison developed her fear. Some possible reasons might be:

- The exterminator may be the first bearded man Allison has ever noticed.
- She may have read a book or seen a frightening TV program that had a bearded man in it.
- Allison's fear may be related to her mother's fear of cockroaches. She generalizes the fear of this exterminator to all bearded men.

The important point is not so much *how* Allison developed this fear, but the need to deal with the *reality* of her fear.

How do Jeannie and Amos try to help Allison overcome her fear?

- Are Jeannie's reactions typical of the way many parents might have reacted?
- Why doesn't Allison tell Jeannie why she's afraid?
- How does Jeannie's conversation about the cockroaches affect Allison? Why?
- What might have happened if Jeannie had ignored Allison's fear? Would it have gone away?
- What does Amos have in mind when he brings the fake beard home? How and why does this help Allison?

Comments:
Figuring out a way to help Allison overcome her fear involves a lot of problem solving for Jeannie and Amos:

- Jeannie reasons with Allison, trying to convince her that she shouldn't be afraid. Then she tries to force Allison to get used to Bumpo and his beard.
- After her own bout with fear, Jeannie suddenly realizes that she hasn't acknowledged Allison's fear as real. Jeannie shares her own fear with Allison and admits her mistake. She encourages Allison to talk about her fear.
- Jeannie's last strategy involves getting rid of the feared object — asking Bumpo to shave.
- Amos thinks that expressing and acting out her fear will help Allison overcome it.

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It is not clear what finally helps Allison — a combination of approaches or one single method. It is clear, though, that no approach works unless a parent accepts the child's fear as real, whether it is based on real or imaginary dangers. Like Jeannie and Amos, most parents will need to work on solving the problem together and watching how their child responds.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
FEARS ON FILE

Write up a case history of your own childhood fears. Talk to your parents about the fears that you had as a young child:

- What were they?
- What might have caused them?
- What did your parents do that helped you cope with these fears?
- What did they do that didn't help?
- Do you still have these fears?
- If so, how do you cope with them?
- If not, what made the fears go away?
- How did you know when the fears were gone?
- How did you feel?

Take a poll at the conclusion of this exercise and see which fears were the most common.

activity #2
ORDINARY FEARS

Even ordinary things and events can be frightening to a young child. Try to take a child's point of view and describe how each of the following situations might appear.

- a dog eating food
- a vacuum cleaner
- thunder and lightning
- a cut on the arm
- a toilet flushing
- a kidnapping shown on TV
- the dark
- the water

activity #3
HELP RON GET A JOB

Ron Davis has heard that day care centers are particularly interested in hiring male teachers, and he has contacted the director of a day care center near him and arranged to have an interview.

During the interview the director asks Ron what he would do if certain situations arose in the classroom and why. For each of the following situations, tell Ron how he should respond if he wants to get the job.

Ricky, age 2½, has a nightmare during nap time. ?

3-year-old Pamela screams when other children put on their Halloween costumes. ?

5-year-old Stacey refuses to go in the water at the local swimming pool. ?

4-year-old Peter clings to his teacher when the guinea pig is taken out of its cage. ?

When Sammy sees the equipment in the room where he is to have a hearing test, he refuses to go in. ?

Have students inquire at local day care centers on requirements for employment. How many centers interview prospective teachers to find out how they would handle these situations? Do the students think that this would be a good qualifying activity for day care centers to employ?

GRAB BAG

1. Interview 3 preschool children from a day care center, Head Start Center, nursery school, family day care home, or your home or neighborhood. Come to each interview prepared with paper, magic markers or crayons, and spend at least 15 minutes with each child.
   Ask each child to tell you a story or make a picture of something scary that happened to him or her:
   - If the child chooses to tell a story, write it down in the child's own words.
   - If the child draws a picture, ask the child to tell you about the picture, and write the child's comments on the back of the picture.

   Afterwards, share the children's stories and discuss them with your classmates. Do you think their stories were true or imagined?
2. Invite a child psychiatrist or child psychologist to your classroom to talk about the differences between normal childhood fears and phobias.
3. Spend one Saturday morning watching cartoons:
   - What kinds of childhood fears are incorporated into cartoons to draw children's attention?
   - Do these cartoons prey on children's fears, make fun of children, or help them?
4. Use one art form such as photography, dance, music, drawing or painting to illustrate either young children's or your own fears. Display or perform your work for the class.
5. Conduct a poll in your school to find out what fears are most common. Why do you think these fears are the most common among students in your school?

to discuss

1. How do you deal with your own fears? Are you any more or less afraid if there's no real basis for your fear? Do you feel silly or upset if your fears are irrational? Why?
2. How do you think the following Ethiopian proverbs relate to the topic of childhood fears?
   He who conceals his disease cannot expect to be cured.
   Unless you call out, who will open the door?
3. Sometimes adults use fear to discipline children. They may say, for instance: "If you run away from me in the grocery store one more time, I'm going to leave you there." Or: "If you're not quiet, the Bogeyman will get you."
   Set up a classroom debate on the pros and cons of using fear to discipline children.
4. Will children with childhood fears become cowards?
5. How are adult fears incorporated into adult TV shows to draw a large TV audience? Are you attracted or repelled when fear is a strong element of a program?
6. How can adults teach children about danger without instilling fear in them?
7. One great man said "... the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Who said this and what did he mean? Does this quote contradict or support the ideas presented in this unit?

to research

1. The effect of TV violence on children's fears.
2. How our bodies respond to fear (for example, our nervous and cardiovascular systems).
3. Find 3 children's stories that deal with common childhood fears such as body injury, fear of the dark, separation from parents, monsters or wild animals. Write a short paragraph on the technique used in each book to help a child cope with fear.

Among these are:
My Dentist by Harlow Rockwell
There's a Nightmare in My Closet by Mercer Mayer

4. How fear can be used to motivate groups of people. For instance, how was fear used to form mass movements such as the Nazi movement? (*A True Believer*, by Eric Hoffer, and *Escape from Freedom*, by Erich Fromm, are possible sources for this project.)
5. The use of fear in fairy tales. Do fairy tales help young children work out their fears or add to them? (See *The Uses of Enchantment* by Bruno Bettelheim).
6. The different between fear and anxiety.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that will give you more information on children's fears.

The Child Under Six. James L. Hymes, Jr. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 2d ed., 1974.

Children and Fear. Stephen Joseph. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1977.

Children's Fears. Benjamin Wolman. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978.

Fears of Children. Helen Ross. Write to: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1540 Page Mill Road, Palo Alto, California 94304 (booklet)

The Magic Years. Selma Fraiberg. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959. (paperback)

Your Child From One to Six. Richard H. Granger. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (paperback)

SOCIETAL SUPPORT: WE'RE ALL IN IT TOGETHER

There Comes a Time

TO BEGIN...

One measure of a country's greatness is the extent to which it invests in the next generation, the children who will carry on its purposes and ideals.

Parents do their best to meet this requirement of a great society, but they cannot do it alone.

To prepare for this unit, students might plan all the services they would make available for people if they were going to establish an ideal community. To whom would these services be offered? What ages or groups would be given priority?

FROM THE EDITORS

Children's needs are best met by providing for the needs of parents. When parents get the help they need, they can then provide for their children.

In this unit you will learn about some of the things parents need in order to do a good job raising their children. You will read about some resources that are available to meet these needs, and some ways in which parents can go about finding the help they need. You will also learn about some of the things that society still needs to do in order to meet its responsibility to children and parents.

THE BIG IDEAS

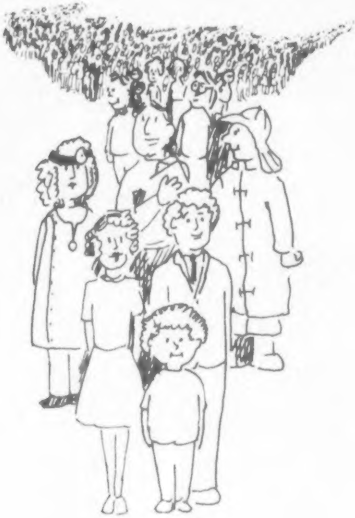
- No family can stand alone. Parents raise children best when they feel that they are not alone at this big job.

It is comforting to note that there are a range of supports available, from the neighbor across the hall to the Federal government.

- Asking for help is not a sign of failure. On the contrary, it is a sign of effective parenting.
- Although it is sometimes hard to find, there is a lot of help available to families.
- Society could do much more, though, to help families raise their children. Parents have a right to expect society to meet its responsibility to families.

Who is on my side? Who?
— *II. Kings, 9:32*

SOCIETY:
THE LARGER FAMILY



> Just as the youngster turns time after time plaintively to mother or father to say, "Fix it, please," so the immediate family must turn to the larger family — the community, the state, the nation — for services and support.
>
> — James L. Hymes in
> *The Child Under Six*

And no one is born knowing how to do it. Parents need information, support and encouragement.

Raising children is a tough job. Although it can be the most rewarding job in the world, it can also be the most demanding. No one can do it alone.

From time to time all parents need help. They may need someone to take care of the children while they go back to work, or a clinic that provides special health care. They may want information on childbirth methods, or just someone to talk to:

Just as children need the support of families, so families need the support of society.

TODAY'S FAMILY

This is more true today than in the past. Today, more than ever before, we are all dependent on each other and on the web of social institutions. Society has become much more complex. And families themselves are changing. The old image of the "typical" American family — that is, one with two children, a father who works, and a mother who stays home — now applies to only about one in six families in this country.

"All Americans must be aware that the 'ideal' family barely exists and will never return as a significant force in American life," concludes a recent survey at Duke University.

Today more mothers are returning to the workplace. More parents are getting divorced. More and more families consist of only one parent. And even in families with two parents, it is becoming increasingly common for both parents to be away during the day. Today more than half of all married women with school-age children work. And families are often far away from relatives who can be counted on to help out in a crisis.

TODAY'S NEEDS

This new family needs a wide variety of services, including:

diagnosis and treatment of health problems,
financial aid,
child care,
parent education,
information and referral,
legal assistance, and
recreation services.

Public and private agencies already provide many of these supports. Unfortunately, some of them are hard to find. Too often, however, even when services are available, parents don't use them. They don't like to ask for help. They think that asking for help is a sign of weakness, and feel they should be able to resolve their problems on their own. They don't want to be thought of as failures.

One reason for this reserve might be what Kenneth Keniston refers to as the "myth of the self-sufficient independent family." The roots of this myth reach deep into Colonial America. Today the myth is one of the most dangerous influences on the family, for it tells us that those who need help are inadequate. It also implies that families are isolated building blocks of society, while in truth the family is intertwined and dependent on all the other parts of society.

A SMART MOVE

But asking for help is not a sign of failure. On the contrary:

> Asking for help is one of the most important skills of being a parent.

It's a sign that parents want to be effective. It shows that they care about their children:

> When parents seek out and accept help, their children are more likely to reach their full potential.

Parents, too, often benefit from societal supports. By participating in the give and take of society, parents may feel less isolated and more a part of their community. Working with others can enable them to grow personally and learn what they have to offer to others. And it's always helpful to know that other people have similar problems.

Have students relate these ideas to Sheila's experience in the film.

Within every local community, then, are services that can strengthen families and expand the opportunities available to parents and their children. Parents should take advantage of these resources for:

SUPPORT IS THERE FOR THE TAKING.

WHO'S ON YOUR LIST?

There are individuals and institutions in nearly every community that provide support of many different kinds. Knowing about these services can improve the quality of life for both parents and children. Take some time to fill out the directory below. Use the phone directory, library, or public agencies to help you find information. You may be surprised at how many people there are ready to help you and your family.

Some communities have already developed directories similar to this one, but in most there is a need for this kind of ready reference.

Babysitting Services

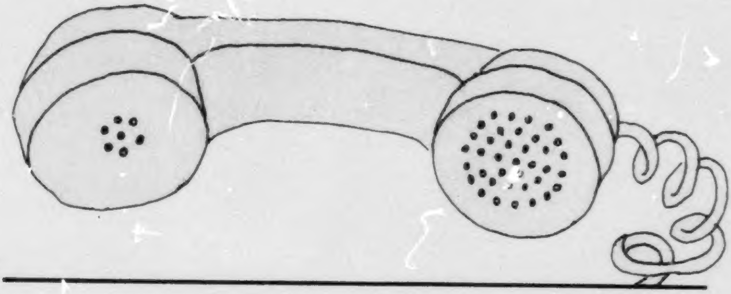
Contact: Colleges, high schools, women's organizations, relatives, and friends

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone:	Phone:

Child Care

Contact: Your State Department of Social Services, Health Department, day care centers, nursery schools, Head Start centers

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone:	Phone:



Clinics

Contact: Your local health department or hospital. Ask about: Clinics for well babies, eyes, speech, hearing, chest, mental health

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone:	Phone:

Counseling

Contact: Churches, hotlines, family service agencies

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone:	Phone:

Health Organizations

Contact: Red Cross, National Foundation March of Dimes, Mental Health Association, County Medical Society

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone:	Phone:

Parent Education

Contact: Your PTA, YMCA, YWCA, YMHA, Parent Effectiveness Training group, adult education center, community college or university

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Phone:	Phone:

Recreation

Contact: Local and county recreation departments, museums, sports clubs, community pools, YMCA, YWCA, YMHA

Name:
Address:

Phone:

Name:
Address:

Phone:

Single Parent Groups

Contact: Parents Without Partners, Big Brother/Big Sister, singles clubs

Name:
Address:

Phone:

Name:
Address:

Phone:

SOCIETY'S RESPONSIBILITY

Family experts agree that if we want to place unbearable pressure on families, the most successful way to do it is to make sure their breadwinners are unemployed.
— Vice-President Walter Mondale

Any society that cares about self-preservation must care about its children. It follows, then, that society needs to support families, for it is within families that children are raised.

It is a sad fact that our country lags behind many others in its support for families. Two institutions in particular — the workplace and the Federal government — have failed to see how their policies affect the lives of families.

Sweden, for example, has a national policy on sick leave which authorizes leave for working parents whenever a child is ill. Sweden has also been trying out a system of paid paternity leave where fathers are allowed seven months' leave after the birth of a child while still receiving 95% of their pay.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Parents who work face a major conflict. On the one hand, they have to earn money and want to advance their careers. On the other hand, they want to spend lots of time with their children — especially when the children are young. In this country today it is difficult to do both.

Most workplaces are not committed to the fullest development of workers and their families. They don't recognize the special needs of parents. Most workplaces are strict about when and for how long their employees work.

Some companies have even set up day care centers for the children of workers.

Some employers, however, are trying out ways to give parents more time to be with their children. These include:

Flexible Work Hours, so that mothers and fathers can be with their children at important times
more **Part-Time Work** without penalties

Studies of part-time workers have shown that they produce more and better quality work in the time they work than do full-time workers.

Time-Off for pregnancy and family emergencies
Sick Leave that includes time off to care for children when they are ill
Maternity and Paternity Leave.

Where these options have been tried out, the results have been very successful. Companies have found that such flexibility usually increases production as well as company morale.

Employers, then, can and should take more seriously the demands of childrearing and the needs of their workers:

FAMILIES SHOULD BE PART OF THE BUSINESS OF BUSINESS.

THE GOVERNMENT

It's hard to think of any national policy area that does not affect the lives of families. Housing, energy, transportation, environment — these and many others affect the quality of family life. Two areas in particular — jobs and child care — have a drastic impact on families.

Unemployment: No child should grow up in poverty, but many families in this country still subsist below the poverty line. This affects children not only in terms of the goods and services available to the family, but also in terms of parental pride and self-respect that comes from having a satisfying job with adequate pay.

Some people think these could be alleviated if a full-employment policy were passed, and the laws against sex and race discrimination enforced.

Day Care: The need for child care in this country has skyrocketed. Today almost all single parents, and over half of married parents, must make child care arrangements. But there are spaces in licensed day care for only 1 out of 7 children who need them.

But, according to a report of the National Academy of Sciences, *Toward a National Policy for Children and Families:*

> *Parents should have the option, first and foremost, of raising their children at home, without sacrificing a reasonable standard of living. . . For those families who out of necessity or preference elect some form of substitute care, a range of alternatives should be available. . .*

Clearly, parents need more help from society in caring for their children. Providing quality day care at affordable prices should be a national priority.

There have been many suggestions as to how Federal, state and local governments can meet the needs of families. Some of these are:

Creating Jobs to achieve full employment
Providing Income Supplements for parents who can't work or don't earn enough to raise a family
Guaranteed Health Care for all families.

Fortunately, many federal and local leaders are finally beginning to realize how everything they do affects families. But we still have not moved as far as most other Western countries in the direction of creating the kind of environment that families need to survive.

As Kenneth Keniston and the Carnegie Council on Children said in *All Our Children:*

> *. . . all today's families need help in raising children. The problem is not so much to reeducate parents but to make available the help they need and to give them enough power so that they can be effective advocates with and coordinators of the other forces that are bringing up their children.*

WE, TOO, NEED A NATIONAL FAMILY POLICY.

Society has a responsibility to families. Parents may have to work to improve the ways in which society relates to and supports its members. Parents may have to:

URGE SOCIETY TO MEET ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO FAMILIES.

Characters:

Sheila Hornbrenner — *a young mother*
April Hornbrenner — *Sheila's 18-month-old daughter*
Maeve Caruso — *April's teacher*
Rita Vashon — *a parent who teams up with Sheila*
Mrs. Hoffman — *Director of Crowther Day Care Center*
Other parents and teachers

FILM REVIEW SECTION

There Comes a Time

Funds have been cut for the day care center where April Hornbrenner is enrolled, and the center may have to close. Sheila goes to a meeting to discuss the situation, and agrees to help look for another space for the center.

Sheila's first efforts to find another location are discouraging, and she wants to take on another responsibility. But Rita, another parent in the group, suggests that the two of them work as a team. Together they attend the board meeting of a church that is considering their request. Sheila offers solutions to the problems that some of the members present, and arguments why the church should help them. Sheila and Rita leave the meeting confident that if they don't get that place, they'll find another.

HOW DID SHEILA CHANGE AS A RESULT OF THIS EXPERIENCE?

Documentary:

The notion that parents who are in need of support can find it if they look for it is underscored by a worker for ALCOR, who was herself assisted by the program when she was a 15-year-old mother. The types of health, education and referral services provided by this community-based program in Kentucky are explained.

Have the students discuss the point made in the documentary that everyone needs societal support. Is societal support only for teenage parents? The disadvantaged?

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

How do Sheila's feelings about societal support change during the course of the show?

- What position does Sheila take in regard to societal support before the crisis at Crowther? After the crisis?
- What role does Rita play in Sheila's growth?

Comments:
At the start of the show Sheila appears to be unconcerned about both the need for societal support and its availability. Following the crisis at the center, though, she begins to gain new awareness. She discovers how important the center is to her life (and April's) and gradually takes an active role in securing the center's continuation. Rita, Sheila's new friend during this period, helps Sheila to clarify her feelings and channel them into action. By the end of the program, Sheila is an active proponent of societal support and is willing to fight for her right to this support.

What kinds of societal support appear in this program?

- Is societal support only needed by day care parents?
- Does societal support entail more than financial backing?

Comments:
In this program there are various examples of societal support noted. Some of these involve finances such as the donation of equipment, facilities, and food. Others are personal services which run the gamut from day care to babysitting for a friend's child to supportive conversation. During the course of this show, Sheila comes to appreciate all of these areas of support.

While the show concentrates on the plight of day care parents, the impression should not be made that they are the ones most in need of societal support. We all do, for "we're in it together."

Parents who have no idea where to start looking can begin with local school or church officials, a clinic, or a social worker.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
WHERE WOULD YOU GO?

Where would you go in your community if . . .

. . . you suspected your child had a speech problem?

. . . you wanted to go back to work after 15 years at home?

. . . your child were having difficulty recovering from the divorce?

. . . you wanted more information on how to help your child learn?

...you needed someone to take care of your child after school?

...you were a single parent who wanted to talk about your problems and concerns with other people?

...you needed financial help raising your children?

...you wanted moral support?

...you wanted to set up a day care center?

activity #2
YOU BE THE JUDGE

Conduct a classroom debate on the following proposition:

Government spending on societal supports for families is a form of welfare and a waste of the taxpayers' money.

activity #3
DEAR EDITOR

Write a letter to the editorial column of a newspaper in support of more flexible employment policies that take into account the needs of parents.

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Do a case study of one of the local organizations listed in "Who's on Your List?", pages 5 and 6. Visit the organization and talk to people there to find out the purpose of the organization and how it serves the needs of families. Combine your case study with those of your classmates into an annotated directory of organizations for parents.
2. Write to your state or local representative and tell him or her what you think the government should be doing to support families. Share his or her response with your classmates.

They could, for example, set up places where children could play while their parents shopped.

Parents can set up babysitting pools, parent discussion groups, play groups, and community centers, for example. Retired persons and older children are often an untapped resource, too.

3. Find out if there are any businesses in your community that are trying to take into consideration the needs of families. Talk to someone there to find out:

    what they are doing (flexitime, part time work, maternity/paternity leave, etc.)
    why they decided to do it
    how it is working out

4. Talk to your own parents and to other parents to find out how they think society could help families. What help have they asked for? Was it useful? What else would they like to see done?

to discuss

1. Why is it so hard for many of us to ask for help?
2. How can stores, supermarkets and other public places help families?
3. What are some of the ways parents can support each other?
4. Can societal supports ever substitute for parental responsibility? Why or why not?

to research

1. What societal supports are provided by countries who take more of a collective responsibility for children? (For example, Sweden and Russia.)
2. The recommendations made to employers by the 1970 White House Conference on Children to help workers with the parenting role.
3. Major U.S. companies and governments that operate on flexible time. How successful has their experiment been?
4. Articles written by Urie Bronfenbrenner on the societal supports needed by the American family.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . .societal supports

Ourselves and Our Children. Boston Women's Health Book Collective. New York: Random House, 1978. (paperback)

All Our Children. Kenneth Kenniston. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977. (paperback)

Parents' Yellow Pages. Frank Caplan, ed. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1978. (paperback)

. . .child care in different countries

Who Cares for the Baby? Beatrice Marden Blickman and Nesha Bass Springer. New York: Schocken Books, 1978.

Children of the Dream. Bruno Bettelheim. New York: Macmillan, 1969. (paperback)

Two Worlds of Childhood, U.S. and U.S.S.R. Urie Bronfenbrenner. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1970. (paperback)

COMPETENCE:
IT'S ALL IN YOUR MIND

Stacking the Deck

TO BEGIN . . .

"Nothing succeeds like success" is an old saying which conveys one basic message of this unit. When children — or adults for that matter — are successful at an undertaking, they tackle the next job with zest and their chances of succeeding are increased. Nothing works better than success to free energy and permit the person to use all his brain and muscle power on target.

Another learning of this unit is that we act according to what we believe about ourselves, even if those beliefs are not true. The picture of ourselves that we carry around in our minds is more important than even our genetic inheritance in determining how competent we become.

To begin this unit, have students read "A True Story" and answer the question at the end. Ask them to come up with examples that illustrate this principle.

Do they know a handsome boy who thinks he's homely? A smart girl who thinks she's dumb?

FROM THE EDITORS

Competence is needed for sheer survival. We wouldn't last long in this world if we didn't have certain basic coping skills.

Competence also opens the door to fulfillment. We lead happier and more satisfying lives when we are able to apply our talents and capabilities.

In this booklet you will learn how each of us develops self-confidence or self-doubt, and how we learn whether or not we are competent. Some guidelines and special activities for increasing competence in children are also included.

THE BIG IDEAS

- How competent children become is largely determined by how competent they believe they are.
- Self-confidence — or self-doubt — is taught to children by parents and other adults.
- When children's mistakes and weaknesses are constantly pointed out and corrected, they learn that they are not competent.
- **When children's strengths are emphasized and they are given chances to be successful, they learn they are capable.**

Alice: Where I come fron, people study what they are *not* [emphasis added] good at in order to be able to do what they *are* good at.

Mad Hatter: We only go around in circles in Wonderland; but we always end up where we started. Would you mind explaining yourself?

Alice: Well, grown-ups tell us to find out what we did wrong, and never do it again.

Mad Hatter: That's odd! It seems to me that in order to find out about something you have to study it. And when you study it, you should become better at it. Why should you want to become better at something and then never do it again? But please continue.

Alice: Nobody ever tells us to study the right things we do. We're only supposed to learn from the wrong things. But we are permitted to study the right things *other* people do. And sometimes we're even told to copy them.

Mad Hatter: That's cheating!

Alice: You're quite right, Mr. Hatter. I do live in a topsy-turvy world. It seems like I have to do something wrong first, in order to learn from that what not to do. And then, by not doing what I'm not supposed to do, perhaps I'll be right. But I'd rather be right the first time, wouldn't you?

— Lewis Carroll
Alice in Wonderland

Taken from THE ANNOTATED ALICE by Lewis Carroll, illustrated by John Tenniel. Introduction and notes by Martin Gardner. Copyright © 1960 by Martin Gardner. Used by permission of Clarkson N. Potter, Inc.

This example illustrates how our perceptions of ourselves can have no basis in reality, but still have a complete feeling of truth to us. We behave in terms of what we *learn* about ourselves, not in terms of what we are in some objective, generic sense.

A TRUE STORY

A high school senior — let's call him Bob — took the college aptitude test (ACT) and received a score of 96. He thought this meant he had an IQ of 96.

That fall Bob entered college. In the first semester he received failing or barely passing grades in all of his courses. He started to think about dropping out of school, and went to talk to a counselor at the college. The counselor happened to mention that a score of 96 on the ACT meant that he had scored higher than 96% of all the other students who took the test. Bob's IQ was not 96 as he had believed, but somewhere between 130 and 140.

Bob decided to stay in school. In the second semester, he got A's in nearly all his courses.

IN HIS FIRST SEMESTER OF COLLEGE, BOB DID VERY POORLY IN SCHOOL. BUT IN THE SECOND SEMESTER, HE DID VERY WELL. WHAT DO YOU THINK MADE THE DIFFERENCE?

_______ Bob's IQ changed.

_______ Bob took easier courses in the second semester.

_______ Bob learned that he was capable of doing college level work.

The Confidence Game

Self-trust is the first secret of success.
— *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"He's lost his confidence."

How often have you heard sportscasters or coaches say that about athletes who are in a slump? To do well, athletes need to believe in themselves. But that's not true just for athletes. It's also true for teachers and lawyers and business executives, butchers and bakers and candlestick makers. It's true for adults, adolescents, and children. And it's true for you.

Don't you behave differently in situations where you feel confident than in those where you don't?

Have students give some examples from their own experience.

What is **Confidence**? For Reggie Jackson it's knowing he can hit whatever the pitcher throws. For you it may be knowing that you can do the latest dance. For a 3-year-old it may be knowing that she can tie her shoelaces or put a puzzle together.

But no matter what the task, self-confidence is knowing you can do it.

A POWERFUL FORCE

Self-confidence — or the lack of it — plays an important part in determining how **Competent** — or capable — we become. The abilities we were born with, of course, also help to determine whether we succeed or fail. But ability is not enough. To become really competent, we have to believe in those abilities. In other words:

Those Who Think They Can Do,
Do.
Those Who Think They Can't,
Don't.

To a large extent, we become what we think we are.

Competence, then, is learned. It is not something we are born with. We learn that we are competent — or not — as other people react to what we do. What we learn has a major effect on how we approach new things.

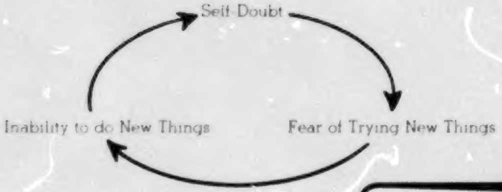
Competence is a vital part of our self-concept.

THE CHILD OF SELF-DOUBT

When a child with no self confidence approaches a new task, he or she is likely to think:

> *I'm a loser. I just can't seem to do things as well as other people. There's no use trying. I'll just fail and be humiliated again. It's just too hard to learn new things.*

Children who have learned that they are not competent are afraid to try new things. By avoiding new things, however, they never get a chance to learn that they *can* do things.


Self Doubt
Fear of Trying New Things
Inability to do New Things

Life becomes a vicious circle.

Learning is largely a journey into the unknown. It involves risk and uncertainty. If children have no confidence, they won't be willing to expose themselves to new experiences. This is what John Holt calls "fear of failure."

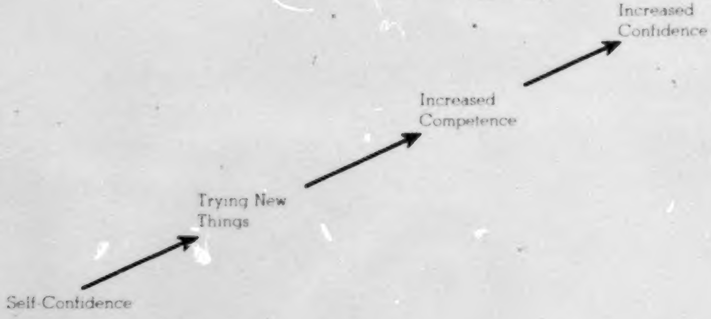
THE CHILD OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

Here, on the other hand, is how a self-confident child might approach life:

> *I can do lots of things well. Of course, I still have a lot to learn, and there are some things I can't do yet. But I'm sure if I keep on trying I'll be able to do those things someday. Learning is fun.*

Children who have learned that they are competent eagerly reach out for new experiences. When they learn to do these things, their self-confidence grows even more. This leads them to try more difficult things:

But let's not expect a child, or ourselves, to excel at *everything.* Knowing one's strengths and accepting one's weaknesses is a sign of confidence, too. See unit on *Individuality.*


Increased Confidence
Increased Competence
Trying New Things
Self-Confidence

Their path is onward and upward.

Self-confidence, then, leads to competence and success. Let's look at how parents can give their children this precious gift.

To Competence Through Confidence

It is . . . good . . . to sing praises.
Psalm 92

Have you ever noticed how proud young children are of their accomplishments? How they will urge their parents to "watch this" or "look at what I made"?

Young children want to be seen as capable and strong. How parents and other adults react to what they do has a powerful effect on what they learn about themselves.

Parents can either inspire or destroy the child's love of learning, desire to know, and strive to become competent.

Children believe their parents. Here are some ways parents can help children believe that they are competent.

IN PRAISE OF PRAISE

To some parents, "common sense" says: "If I want my children to be competent, I must be sure to point out and correct all their mistakes." These parents may end up spending a lot of time telling children about their weaknesses. But constant criticism just teaches children they can't do things very well. Gradually, they lose confidence in themselves.

As John Holt pointed out in *How Children Learn:*

Most of us are tactful enough with other adults not to point out their errors, but not many of us are ready to extend this courtesy (or any other courtesy, for that matter) to children. Yet it is important that we should, because they are perceptive and sensitive, and very easily hurt, humiliated and discouraged.

When, however, parents focus on their children's strengths, they help their children learn that they are capable. By letting children know how it feels to succeed, parents encourage children to keep trying.

What Would You Say?

Jimmy is trying to dress himself. He gets his shirt and jeans on fine, but puts his socks on inside out. Will he be more likely to get them right the next time if his mother says:

> *"Oh, Jimmy, you put your socks on wrong again. Why can't you remember that the fuzzy part goes on the inside?"*
>
> *or*
>
> *"Good! You got your shirt and jeans right. Why don't you just change your socks so the fuzzy part is inside."*

The second response is best, of course, for it is more likely to add to Jimmy's self confidence, and thus to his competence.

EXPECT THE BEST

Did you know that some scientists believe they can make flatworms turn in a certain direction on a maze simply by *expecting* them to turn that way? If this is true for worms, just think what effect adult expectations must have on young children!

Children tend to live up to the expectations of parents and other adults. They usually act the way people expect them to act.

It follows, then, that if parents want children to become competent, they should expect this of their children. They should show children that they believe in them by giving them responsibility and letting them do things for themselves as much as possible.

This is the "Pygmalion" experiment, reported in: *Pygmalion in the Classroom.* Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968.

A Prophecy Fulfilled

In a famous experiment conducted during the 1960's, a group of first grade children was given an IQ test. Their teachers were told that the purpose of the test was to find out which children would do especially well in school.

Before scoring the tests, the experimenters selected at random the names of several children in each class. They told the teachers that these children would be their best students." The experimenters had no basis for saying this.

Since the names of these children had just been drawn from a hat, they wanted to see how this "false" information would affect the success of these children in school.

At the end of the year all the children were tested again. Which children do you think improved the most? Right. It was those children whom the teachers had been told would do well.

This experiment is an example of a Self-Fulfilling Prophecy:

> *When we expect people to behave in certain ways, very often this prophecy — or prediction — comes true.*

See the discussion of body language in the unit on *Loving Your Children*. Often we communicate our truest feelings to children through our facial expressions, gestures, tones of voice, and movements.

In the case of the first-graders in the experiment, their teachers expected some of them to do well and others not to. Somehow, the teachers communicated this prophecy to the students. The children whose names had been drawn at random learned from their teachers that they were competent, and they acted accordingly. The prophecy was fulfilled.

How do you think the teachers in this experiment showed the students what their expectations were?

PROVIDE EXPERIENCES FOR SUCCESS

"Nothing teaches like success," goes the old saying, and how true it is. When we succeed at something, our confidence increases. Our knowledge that we are competent leads to further success.

Young children, especially, need to experience success. The list of things they can do is much shorter than the list of things they can't do. They need their parents' help in learning that they *can* do things. Parents can take advantage of everyday opportunities to help children see what they can do. They can find tasks that children can do around the house. For example, a 3-year-old may not be able to completely set the table, but may be very good at putting a spoon at each place.

They can also make it more likely that a child will be successful when they:

- dress the child in simple, sturdy clothes
- provide nonbreakable dishes and glasses
- provide some low hooks and stepstools for reaching

But don't do anything for a child that he or she could do without help.

Parents can also help children when they are experiencing difficulty. If a child is struggling unsuccessfully to put on his tee shirt, the parent could help by slipping the shirt over his head and arms. Then the child could experience the success of completing the operation by pulling it down over his tummy.

Of course, no parent can, or would want to, keep children from every possibility of failing. Children also learn from failure. But parents who want their children to grow in self-confidence will be sure that they have many regular successful experiences. Competence requires challenge and practice. Activities such as those on the next page can help children discover their talents and interests and learn:

"I CAN DO IT."

CONFIDENT - IALLY YOURS

There are many areas in which children can learn that they are competent. Here are just a few.

Arts & Crafts
Even young children can master the basics of popular arts and crafts like: sewing; woodworking; weaving; sculpturing in clay, soap or papier mache; potato printing; paper cutting and folding; jewelry making; painting; and making musical instruments. Save materials you usually throw out, and look at resource books like those below to see how children can put these materials to creative use.

Camping
You can camp right in your own backyard, or at a nearby park or beach. Children can be assigned simple tasks like: unpacking; collecting wood; helping put up the tent; and cooking. There'll be opportunities to practice and pick up lots of new skills: zipping and unzipping; making knots; fishing; reading a compass; and crabbing. The satisfaction of working together toward a common goal is one they won't forget soon.

Contributing To The Household
Children feel good about themselves when they have something to offer to the running of the household. From an early age, they can take on responsibility for simple tasks like: picking up the newspaper; putting away groceries; folding laundry; emptying baskets; raking leaves; and sweeping the floor. Older children feel especially proud when they can help with younger siblings: holding the baby's bottle; making simple toys for the baby; or telling a story to a younger brother or sister.

Gardening
To children there are few things more fun than digging in the dirt. Planting seeds and watching them grow is a source of wonder and joy to children. They don't need a lot of space. A window box or a few flowerpots will hold some beans, tomatoes, herbs, flowers and radishes.

Body Movement
Self-confidence grows with physical strength and coordination. Give children lots of space, materials and opportunities for free physical movement. In addition, there are many special experiences you may want to introduce them to: dancing; acting; playing an instrument; singing; and swimming, for example.

Collecting
Children love to collect things: rocks; coins; stamps; buttons; bottles; bugs; shells; and butterflies, for instance. With a little help from you, children can learn a lot about one area, and end up with a collection that they can be proud of. Collecting offers a great opportunity for hikes and field trips, too.

Cooking
Food is important to children, and knowing how to prepare it gives them a sense of price and accomplishment. You may be surprised at how many things children can do in the kitchen. If you help them observe basic safety rules, they can: cut; grind; grate; beat; stir; mash; peel; wash; squeeze; strain; measure; and pour. They can help shop and plan menus, and follow simple recipes. In the process, they develop their small muscles, and learn a lot about: foods; words; numbers; time; safety; and following directions.

Observing Holidays
Children needn't be passive observers of holidays. They can become part of family traditions by helping to plan and prepare for celebrations. They can: help select the Thanksgiving turkey and Christmas tree; make Halloween costumes and Valentine's Day Cards; dye Easter eggs; and make Matzo for Passover. Many holidays — like Martin Lüther King's birthday or St. Patrick's Day — are a good time to talk about history, folklore and the meaning behind holiday observations.

Characters:

Sandy Marshall — *a young mother*
Marc — *Sandy's son, age 5*
Portia — *Marc's sister, age 3*
Grandpa — *Sandy's father-in-law*
Sonny — *Sandy's brother-in-law*
Marc's teacher

Documentary:

Children are viewed in a Connecticut school and at home doing activities aimed at developing their self-esteem. Parents and teachers discuss why they think that it is important to develop a feeling of competence in children and give examples of how they help their children feel self-confident.

Have students discuss what the parents and teachers in the documentary seem to be doing to promote a feeling of competence in the children. If the parents and teachers had acted otherwise, how might the children have developed a lack of competence performing these same activities?

FILM REVIEW SECTION

Stacking the Deck

Sandy Marshall has been playing cards at home with her son, Marc, to help him with his numbers. When Grandpa notices that Marc has trouble keeping his high and low numbers straight, he decides to take this "problem" into his own hands.

Grandpa starts giving Marc daily math lessons at which he focuses on Marc's mistakes. Marc soon loses his ability to concentrate both at home and at school. Finally, Sandy decides that Grandpa's program is doing more harm than good. She starts playing cards with Marc herself again, and Marc regains his former enthusiasm and confidence.

Grandpa cannot understand why no one appreciates his efforts until Sonny points out to Grandpa all the things he is doing wrong as he tries to fix the stereo. Suddenly Grandpa understands how Marc must have felt during their math lessons.

HOW DID MARC FEEL DURING THOSE LESSONS?

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

Why did Marc react so badly to Grandpa's instruction?

- If Grandpa had given Marc some encouragement in between the criticism, would it have made a difference in Marc's reaction? In his performance?
- Was it the fact that it was his grandfather giving the criticism that upset Marc? Do you think Marc would have reacted the same way if it had been Sandy giving the criticism? His teacher? A stranger?
- What effect did Grandpa Marshall's methods have on Marc's ability to perform?

Comments:
Grandpa Marshall's technique for improving Marc's performance was to point out all of Marc's mistakes and to concentrate on making things right. There was never a mention of what Marc was able to perform correctly. From the steady barrage of criticism Marc received, he began to feel — and act — incapable. His performance deteriorated markedly. If Grandpa had been able to praise Marc for those things he did well, perhaps Marc wouldn't have lost all confidence in himself. For when Marc began to believe he was as incapable as Grandpa made him feel, he was unable to do well even those number skills that he had already mastered.

The effect of Grandpa's critical instruction techniques was so rapid in Marc partially because his grandfather is someone whose love and respect mean so much to Marc. When he thought that his grandfather had lost faith in Marc's abilities, he began to lose faith himself. It is doubtful if a stranger or acquaintance could have had the same crushing effect on Marc that Grandpa did.

What was it that Sonny was able to teach Grandpa Marshall?

- Do you think that Sonny could have gotten the same message across to his father verbally?
- What do you think motivated Sonny to try to prove this point to his father?
- Do you think that Grandpa will change his ideas about correcting mistakes permanently? Or do you think that the change is only temporary?

Comments:
Sonny was able to demonstrate to his father, rather graphically, what it felt like when someone only mentions your mistakes, never even noticing when you have done something correctly.

It is doubtful that Sonny could have made his point so well through a heart-to-heart talk with his father. For one thing, "feeling" a message is a much stronger way of making a point than is just hearing it. In Sonny's particular case, the problem is complicated by the fact that his father does not always respect his opinions and is not likely to give credence to his advice. (This may be the effect of Mr. Marshall having deprived Sonny of a sense of competence as a child, as well.)

It is likely that Sonny intervened because he identified so strongly with Marc. Sonny saw what was happening in Marc and decided to act before the situation went too far.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

In each of the following situations, how would you respond to the child in a way that could increase his or her sense of competence and confidence?

Three year old Janie is trying out her new puzzle. It's taking her a long time to put it back together, but she seems happy and totally absorbed. She's been trying to find the right spot for one particular piece for about 5 minutes now. It is painful for you as a parent to watch this slow process.

?

Your 4-year-old son and his best friends are learning how to throw a baseball. Your son has been having trouble, but is gradually getting better. He keeps glancing at his friend, though, who is making much faster progress.

?

Your daughter is helping you prepare for her fifth birthday party. She asked if she could set the table by herself, and you let her. She's very proud of herself, even though she's put all the forks on the right side of the plates, and the glasses near the edge of the table.

?

Another example: What would you do if you saw that a child's block structure is sure to fall when the next block is added?

You may choose to role play these situations with your classmates. If you do, have the student who plays the child comment on how the "parent's" response made him or her feel. Have the rest of the class offer suggestions as to how else the "parent" might have responded.

activity #2
REMEMBER HOW IT FEELS

With your classmates, think back on your own experience to times when you felt people saw only your weaknesses, or didn't expect very much of you, or did other things to lower your self confidence. Choose 3 or 4 of these incidents, and role-play them.

activity #3
COMPETENCE BINGO

Show how competent you are by finding the answers to each of the following questions in the box below. If you answer each question correctly, the answers will form a straight line.

In other words, like the game BINGO.

1. The ability to do things is called COMPETENCE
2. SELF-CONFIDENCE is knowing you can do something.
3. Competence is largely LEARNED by children from their parents.
4. One way children gain in competence is by having their STRENGTHS pointed out.
5. Young children need lots of chances to experience SUCCESS.
6. Children who feel confident are usually EAGER to try new things.
7. Parents who give children lots of PRAISE help them feel good about their abilities.
8. Parents' EXPECTATIONS play a major role in how capable children become.

[✓ Strengths]	[✓ Eager]	Criticism	[✓ Learned]
Incompetence	Weaknesses	[✓ Success]	Inherited
Self-Doubt	[✓ Expectations]	Failure	Afraid
[✓ Competence]	Responsibility	[✓ Praise]	[✓ Self-Confidence]

GRAB BAG

to do

1. In a nursery school, day care center or Head Start center, observe children at play for at least one half hour and look for differences among them in their self confidence:

    Do some children take more initiative than others in trying out new and different things?
    Are some children more willing to do things on their own?
    Do some children seem able to do more things than others?
    How do the adults in the room encourage or discourage children's sense of competence and confidence?

2. Choose one or two children from the above group who seem most confident of themselves, and one or two who seem less confident. Take each of them aside privately and ask them to tell you what things they can do well, and what things they like about themselves. How do the children differ in their answers?
3. Invite a psychologist to talk to your class about the relationship between competence and self-esteem.

Athletic coaches have to be good psychologists, too. Invite your coach to class, have him talk about how he prepares players for winning a game.

to discuss

1. Did you ever feel as a child that you couldn't do anything right? How did your parents or other adults make you feel better or worse about your abilities?
2. **How does it affect your performance now when someone criticizes you a lot? When someone praises you?**
3. How can you help children learn if you don't point out their mistakes?

What implications does this have for education?

4. Do certain children, because of negative social expectations, need special help feeling competent? What can their parents do to increase their self confidence?

See the unit on *Handicaps*.

5. How does this quote relate to competence?

> "Whatever one believes to be true
> either is true –
> or becomes true in one's mind."
> — John C. Lilly
> *The Center of the Cyclone*

to research

1. How self-confidence affects performance.
2. Some programs designed to help adults become more successful through increased self-confidence.

A number of popular paperbacks address this topic.

3. Experiments that have shown the power of the self-fulfilling prophecy.

See Rosenthal and Jacobson's *Pygmalion in the Classroom.* An introductory psychology text would be another good resource.

4. The "fear of failure" described by John Holt in his books *How Children Learn* and *How Children Fail.*

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on . . .

. . . the relationship between competence and self-esteem

Peoplemaking. Virginia Satir. Palo Alto, California: Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1972. (paperback)

Your Child's Self-Esteem. Dorothy Corkille Briggs. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1970. (paperback)

. . . how children learn self-confidence and self-doubt

How Children Fail. John Holt. New York: Delta, 1964. (paperback)

How Children Learn. John Holt. New York: Dell, 1969. (paperback)

. . . some activities that can increase self-confidence and competence

I Saw a Purple Cow and 100 Other Recipes for Learning. Ann Cole, Carolyn Haas, Faith Bushnell, Betty Weinberger. Boston: Little, Brown, 1972. (paperback)

The Mother's Almanac. Marguerite Kelly and Elia Parsons. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1975. (paperback)

A Pumpkin in a Pear Tree. Creative Ideas for Twelve Months of Holiday Fun. Ann Cole, Carolyn Haas, Elizabeth Heller, Betty Weinberger. Boston: Little, Brown, 1976. (paperback)

CREATIVITY: A FRESH LOOK ON THE WORLD

Christinitas

TO BEGIN...

Look for creativity. It isn't just in the museum or symphony hall. It's all around us — in us, ready to be recognized and developed. Most of us have the potential to be creative in one way or another.

Open your students' eyes to their own creativity by giving them a piece of paper or rubber band and asking them to discover how many different things they can do with it. Then discuss what creativity is.

FROM THE EDITORS

Some people think that the only creative people are artists and writers. But that's a myth. This myth prevents people from recognizing the potential for creativity within each of us. It closes their eyes to the examples of imaginative thinking that are all around us.

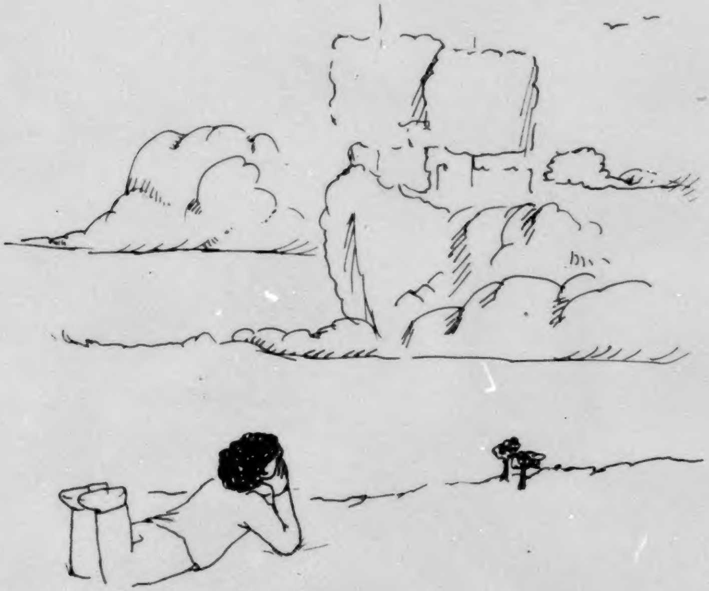
This booklet defines creativity in its broadest sense. It tries to show that people of all occupations and ages can think creatively. You'll learn how children gain the ability to think and act in imaginative ways, and what parents can do to support this growth.

THE BIG IDEAS

Creativity is the ability to think and act in imaginative and unique ways.

Parents foster creativity when they encourage and praise children for exploring, experimenting and making decisions on their own.

Parents stifle creativity when they expect children to think and act in only one "right" or "correct" way.



If I were to ask one thing above all others . . .
it would be imagination . . .
the kind of mind that is playful, fanciful,
odd in the relationships it perceives,
that actively connects things as they are
with things as they might be,
and always pokes into corners
and comes up with that which excites laughter or wonder.

— Kenneth Eble
The Perfect Education
(New York: Macmillan, 1966)

CREATIVITY: The Spark in Us All

It seemed to Beth that she spent her whole life making Keith's baby food and feeding it to him. But she was determined to give him home-prepared foods, so she cooked and mashed up a fresh vegetable before each meal. One day, as she popped ice cubes from the tray, an idea burst upon her. "I'VE GOT IT! I could freeze a lot of baby food and thaw a cube before each meal!"

There are glorious moments like those above when a new twist in our thinking suddenly lets us see things in a fresh and unique way.

Sometimes those moments burst upon us as suddenly as a shooting star. At other times, the creative process is slow and painful. It took Thomas Edison years of experimentation to find the right filament to create the light bulb.

Do you consider yourself a creator or inventor? Creativity isn't limited to artists. Everyone has that potential. For creativity is the ability to:

think and act in imaginative and unique ways,
look beyond ready-made solutions,
experiment and gain insight, and
express ideas in new and unusual ways.

Whether we work with words, wood, hair, movement, or steel and concrete, we can all be creative. We were born that way.

WANTED: CREATIVE PEOPLE

To what can you apply your creative talents?

HOMEMAKING
SALES AND SALES DISPLAY
ADVERTISING
CITY PLANNING
COUNSELING
POLITICS
ENGINEERING
TEACHING
FOOTBALL COACHING

In fact, can you think of anything that would not allow for creativity?

The following job ads suggest why many employers value imaginative and flexible thinkers:

FOOD SERVICE BANQUET MANAGER

Organized, creative, aggressive person needed for 140 room hotel in Carestown, Va. Resp. for 7 banquet rooms and restaurant operation. Must know food and beverage procedures. Able to motivate and train service staff and meet our guests.
Send resume to General Manager,
PO Box KYZ, Williams, Va. 23185

HOUSEKEEPER

Reliable, experienced, creative person to manage pleasant home in Washington, D.C. You establish schedule for cleaning, laundry, cooking, shopping and relaxation. You plan **meals. Two school-age children, working parents. 5 days, Mon.-Fri.**
Driver's license. Refs.
$150 per week. 555 7819

ENGINEER — PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Immediate opening for individual experienced in Project Management and fleet modernization process. Must be self starter with initiative and imagination to develop ideas that satisfy changing customer requirements. Considerable career opportunity.
Please call or send resume to
Jerry Knocks
MEILL Industries
1400 Hanesville Road
Oceanville, FL 48100
(396) 555 6678
An Equal Opportunity Employer

TECHNICAL MANAGER

AMSO is looking for person to write dull weekly reports in a creative and inspiring way. Salary to be negotiated. Call 585 8153

Society needs all kinds of creative people — people to run businesses, people to invent new products, and people to find solutions to world problems such as poverty, energy shortages and pollution. One of society's most important goals, then, is to produce children who will become creative adults.

Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties.
— Erich Fromm

the CREATIVE urge

I DID IT!

Holding onto the sofa, 12 month old Meggin stood and looked at her Raggedy Ann. It was near the back of the sofa. She tried to reach it, but it was too far away. There it was, on top of her mother's sweater. Suddenly, she had it! She could pull the sweater toward her and then get the doll!

LOOKING AT IT FROM ALL ANGLES

2-year-old Ben got a toy xylophone for his birthday. He never had played one before. He tried hitting the metal, the wood, the top and the bottom! He used the "right" end of the stick, and the stick end. He picked up the xylophone and looked through the holes. His mother was amazed at his inventions.

If Meggin pulls the tablecloth to get the sugar, however, or Ben tries his sticks on the new coffee table, their parents have to think twice about letting them be creative. It's easy to see how children are discouraged from being inventive.

EXPRESSING IT IN A NEW WAY

Raymond set triangular wedges on a board and explained, "They're trees and they're growing up to the sky. And they're looking at the moon."

. . . TO DISCOVER

To a child, the world is fresh and new.

Faces, hands, and bottles miraculously appear above the baby's crib, then go away. When carried around the house, the infant discovers chairs, pictures, and window panes. What are all these things? Their names and purposes are a mystery.

It's easy to understand why children are so curious, why they itch to touch every object they see.

Children become increasingly creative as they explore the world. From the start, babies use all of their senses to try things out. They scrutinize a face as if to memorize each eyelash and wrinkle. They taste everything that touches their mouths. They bang and drop things to hear the sounds they make. Sometimes they can't connect the things they see with what they hear. They have to learn to put these things together in their minds. As time goes by, they become more capable physically of getting into things, too. They squeeze, shake, pull, take apart. They try making different kinds of sounds.

For more information on sensory stimulation see unit on *The Need for Early Stimulation.*

Ask students to think of other ways young children:
- experiment
- solve problems
- plan
- invent

Children experiment.

They try out every different action they've learned on a new object — just as Sammy did with his new xylophone.

. . . TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

Like many creative adults, young children ask themselves a lot of questions. They find many problems to solve. We forget that such a simple thing as getting a doll that's out of reach is a tough problem for a baby. Toddlers try to figure out problems such as how to walk and carry toys at the same time. Preschoolers tackle harder tasks such as how to put clothes on a doll, paint stripes, make a road, or get into Daddy's tool box.

Have students discuss the relationship between creativity and play. See unit on *Play and Fantasy.*

Often children solve problems in unusual ways, for they have few preconceived ideas about how things are supposed to be done.

They'll try anything. A 3-year-old may shake, bang, and turn a jar upside down rather than use a spoon to get some cocoa. Another may put on his coat by flipping it over his head rather than using the more conventional way.

Gradually, children learn to pause and plan ahead before plunging into action. They start to consider alternatives.

They choose between tape, paste and glue rather than trying the first thing they see. For example, 4-year-old Suzanne thinks about what she wants her painting to look like before she begins to paint. "I'm gonna make stripes. All stripes. Just red and blue and red and blue." Planning ahead makes it easier for her to do what she envisions: "I got to get paint and paper and a brush. A smock too." Planning also helps her think of more and more creative ideas.

Knowing how to do a thing well is an important part of becoming creative. Solutions seldom come "out of the blue." They grow out of practice in attaining skills and experiences with many different things.

. . . TO INVENT

Some time around the third birthday, children develop a bursting desire to recreate everything they've experienced. They make replicas of things they're familiar with and pretend to be people they know. They try to recreate their fantasies, fears and new ideas. And they'll use any means — words, paint, blocks or clay — to express things that are important to them.

In the process of recreating their experiences and ideas, children create something new, unique and special:

Like Raymond's trees that are looking at the moon.

Like the comment from 3 year old Ryan who tasted an olive for the first time, smacked her lips, thought and said, "Oh, it's a pickled grape."

Like the picture that 4-year old Susan gave by saying, "I saw the sun. It redded up the sky.".

It's through such inventions that we learn how children think. It's through such creations that we discover each child's fresh and unique vision of the world.

keeping the Spirit

At some point, most children begin to lose faith in their personal view of the world. They stop exploring and experimenting. They tear up their pictures. They don't dare paint a tree purple or sing their own songs. They lose faith in themselves and their power to think for themselves. Somehow, they learn that there is only one "right" answer, one way to do things.

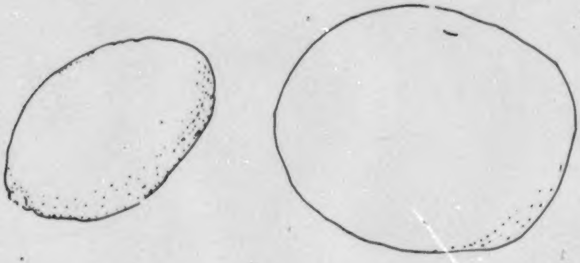
> Ready-made kits and printed pictures to be colored discourage many children from trying their own ideas or drawing their own pictures.

Being intent on teaching the fastest and easiest way to do things, many parents don't allow their children to explore and experiment. They punish a child for getting into things or making a mess. They barely glance at the pictures or crooked vase children bring home, and don't recognize when their children have solved problems in new ways. In doing this, parents discourage creativity, even though they may really value this ability.

Parents can, however, encourage their children's creativity without any difficulty at all. For creativity does not have to be taught; it only has to be allowed to grow. Parents can support their children's creative spirit in the following ways:

HELP CHILDREN TO BE OBSERVANT AND CURIOUS

Rather than hurrying children through humdrum experiences such as shopping in the supermarket or making lemonade, parents can slow down, observe with the child, and talk about what they see, smell, taste, hear and feel. For example, the supermarket is a perfect place to play word games like this one: "It's round and it's yellow. What's it called?" It's a perfect time to help children see that a lemon is as correct an answer as a grapefruit.



ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO EXPLORE AND EXPERIMENT

Try out different ways to play with the same material. Blocks can be hit together, piled up high, arranged in a pattern or packed into a box as well as used for building. Napkins can be folded into all kinds of shapes. Pencils can be used for writing, drawing, or making rubbings.

Play with words appeals to all ages — and there's nothing to clean up afterward, either.

GIVE CHILDREN OPPORTUNITIES TO SOLVE PROBLEMS AND PLAN AHEAD

Such opportunities occur all the time in the home. Parents, for instance, can help their baby figure out where the ball goes when it falls behind a chair. They can encourage their toddler to solve the problem of how to put his shoe on. And they can let their 4-year-old plan what she'll do after supper before going to bed. If parents offer a choice, they should accept and respect children's ideas (as long as they are safe). Children benefit by recalling their ideas and discussing which were worthwhile and which might be changed another time.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO RECREATE THEIR EXPERIENCES AND IDEAS

Introduce a variety of materials such as paint, wood, tools, dress-up clothes, and musical instruments. Parents can set aside times when they and their children use these materials to relive experiences or imagine new things. Children enjoy making up a song about making cookies or drawing a picture of a trip to the ice cream parlor. Reading a poem or story about another child's similar experiences also sets fire to their imagination.

Have the class make a musical instrument out of ordinary objects — such as wooden bowls, empty cans, tongue depressors, or whatever they can find.

Who knows? As parents help their children to think in imaginative and unique ways, they may awaken their own creativity.

> "There's no use trying," she said, "one can't believe impossible things."
>
> "I daresay you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."
>
> — Lewis Carroll
> *Alice in Wonderland*

Characters:

Joe Sanchez — *a father*
Maggie Sanchez — *housewife, married to Joe*
Christina Sanchez — *4-year-old daughter of Joe and Maggie*
Tio Daniel — *Maggie's retired uncle*
Ed Plunkett — *Joe's partner*

FILM REVIEW SECTION

Christinitas

The Sanchez family shops for a present for Maggie's godchild. But baby furniture is so expensive that Joe suggests they make a present.

Most evenings Tio Daniel remakes old furniture and encourages Christina to think of different uses for old pieces of furniture. One such evening Christina puts two chairs together and calls it a baby bed. Using her idea, Tio Daniel makes a crib and Maggie makes its mattress and skirt. They call it a Christinitas. They decide that it's such a good idea that they ought to try selling the cribs for profit. Joe, however, calls it a crazy idea and is furious when he discovers the amount of money they spent buying armchairs. Fortunately, the first cribs sell and they get orders to make 50 more.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS THAT MAGGIE TAKES? ARE THERE ALWAYS RISKS INVOLVED IN CREATIVITY?

Documentary:

Children are seen using a variety of creative approaches to getting a ball out of a creek. Parents talk about how they try to foster creativity in their children.

Have students discuss and compare the different creative ways that children naturally approach problem solving.

DISCUSSING THE PROGRAM

Which members of the Sanchez household are creative?

- Do you think each member of the Sanchez household is creative? In what ways? What is each person's attitude toward solving problems? Toward unique ideas? Creative risk-taking?
- Do you think Christina inherited a creative mind? From whom? Do you think she'll continue to be creative?
- How does the sale of the Christinitas affect each person's creativity? What if the Christinitas had not sold?

Comments:
Like most young children *Christina* had no preconceived ideas about how things work or how things should look. The idea for the Christinitas crib is hers after all. She is creative now, but she is beginning to worry about the risks that creativity can involve. Her creativity may be stifled by Joe and Maggie's feelings.

Maggie thinks of a creative and inexpensive way to make mattresses and crib skirts from leftover fabrics. She needs Tio's reassurance that their idea is a good one. When she learns that the cribs are a success, her faith in their idea and in her decision to take a risk is reaffirmed.

Tio Daniel is highly creative. He sees new possibilities in old things and makes Christina's bed into a real crib. He's self-confident and inspires others to be more creative.

Joe seems unaware of the creativity behind the Christinitas. He's afraid to take risks or think in nontraditional ways.

Which forces in the Sanchez household support and which stifle Christina's creativity?

- In what way is her creativity supported or discouraged?
- Does the physical environment in the Sanchez household foster creativity?
- Would Christina be more creative if she had more toys?

Comments:
Christina is creative by nature, but she needs encouragement. Tio Daniel especially encourages Christina's creativity and confidence in imaginative ideas. Joe discourages her creativity.

The Sanchez household offers Christina many opportunities for creativity and inexpensive materials to rearrange and transform into new creations.

It's possible that the sale of the Christinitas may change Joe's attitude toward creativity (particularly since there was money made from the sale).

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Creativity seems to develop naturally as the child matures. Actions on the parent's part, however, can either stunt or nurture this growth.

After each example below, write a short paragraph discussing how you think the parent's words and actions may affect the child's creativity. (Be sure to give reasons for your answers.)

Mama: *"It's Daddy's birthday tomorrow, Marcel. What do you want to give him?"*

Marcel: *"Some bubble gum."*

Mama: *"Think of something else, honey. Bubble gum isn't good for teeth. Maybe you could make something for Daddy."*

Marcel: *"Yeah. I'll make Daddy a house of wood."*

Mama: *"But what would Daddy do with that? Marcel, why don't you draw Daddy a picture. He'd like one for his office."*

8-year-old Ricky to 4-year-old Sammy: *"You're just a baby. That's not what a person looks like. You forgot the neck. And where's the body?"*

Their father: *"Hold it, Ricky. Sammy makes his drawing in his own special way. He can draw what he wants to. He doesn't have to draw a body if he doesn't want to. He has his own ideas. Sammy, tell us about your picture."*

2-year-old Timmy walked to the shelf in the living room. The picture frame caught his eye.

"NO, Timmy," said his mother, knowing that his finger prints would cloud the glass.

Timmy headed for the painted wooden doll from Russia — the one with several smaller dolls inside it.

"NO, Timmy. Let Mommy do it." She took the dolls apart to show him how to fit them together.

Timmy, however, moved on to the large picture book on the bottom shelf. He started to pull one out.

"Hey, Chuck," she called to Timmy's father. *"Will you take Timmy? He's into everything."*

Daddy: *"Well, Corey. What kind of present do you want to make for Mommy?"*
Corey: *"A big bug."*
Daddy: *"A bug? That's a different idea! What are you going to use to make your bug?"*
Corey: *"A rock and a pipe cleaner."*
Daddy: *"Well, terrific. What are you going to do first?"*

activity #2
FOUND: CREATIVE PERSON.

Think of a friend or acquaintance — adult or child — who is, in your opinion, very creative. Explain why you feel this person is creative.

activity #3
SEARCH FOR CREATIVITY

Creative people have the following qualities:

They are: SPONTANEOUS, IMAGINATIVE, EXPRESSIVE, CURIOUS, FLEXIBLE, and OBSERVANT.

The creative force within them urges them to EXPLORE, EXPERIMENT, INVENT, CREATE and RECREATE.

Find the words in the puzzle below. Words can run down, across, diagonally, backwards, or horizontally. (Hint: every word is either an adjective or a verb.)

E	X	P	E	R	I	M	E	N	T	R
S	I	S	O	R	R	X	F	C	C	E
S	M	S	A	C	C	Y	L	D	R	C
P	A	Z	T	E	U	P	E	A	E	R
O	G	O	N	X	C	R	X	F	A	E
N	I	M	E	P	R	A	I	G	T	A
T	N	A	V	R	E	S	B	O	E	T
A	A	C	N	E	E	A	L	H	U	E
N	T	C	I	S	B	D	E	I	F	S
E	I	O	A	S	I	S	D	J	I	H
O	V	O	B	I	S	P	D	K	G	E
U	E	C	C	V	I	P	E	L	H	T
S	X	Y	D	E	X	P	L	O	R	E

GRAB BAG

to do

Your class might invent a new toy or piece of playground equipment for the school — or a nearby park.

1. Visit a toddler or preschool classroom in a day care center, Head Start center, nursery school or parent cooperative. Observe two children working with paint, clay, wood or another craft material. Take notes on:

   how many different ways the child uses the same material or set of materials
   what each child says while working
   how the child uses equipment or toys to recreate experiences or express imaginative ideas.

   After the child is finished, try to find out what the child has in mind and considers important about the work. For instance, you might say to a child "Tell me about your painting"; "Tell me about this part"; or "What's happening in your picture?" Afterwards, ask if you can borrow the children's work to show your classmates. Explain to your classmates, as best you can, each child's original idea and how he or she created it.
2. Invite two or three people from occupations such as advertising, journalism, catering, babysitting, politics or teaching. Ask each visitor to discuss the importance of creativity in his or her work.
3. Evaluate a preschool and a kindergarten classroom to see if they nurture creativity. Before your visit, write a checklist of important signs of creativity so that you will be able to rate each room on similar items. (For instance, your checklist might include "allow children to solve their own problems.") Afterwards, share your checklist and observations with the class.
4. For one day, look around you for examples of creativity in everyday life — a building, layout of a magazine, or homemaking. Keep a record of them and share them with your class.

to discuss

1. What can schools do to support students' creativity?
2. Can we teach children to follow directions and still encourage creativity?
3. Do your parents value creativity? In what ways are they encouraging you to be creative?

to research

1. Are all creative people highly intelligent? Are all intelligent people highly creative?
2. Write a paper on a person listed below or someone else you feel to be especially creative. Include:

    a brief history of his or her life. Try to discover the forces that fostered this person's creativity.

    a description of his or her occupations(s) and accomplishments. In what way is he or she creative?

    the environment that seems to stimulate him or her to think in imaginative ways. Why they create.

    Charles Richard Drew
    Benjamin Franklin
    Marcus Garvey
    Martha Graham
    Hubert Humphrey
    Margaret Mead
    I. M. Pei
    Geraldo Rivera
    Paul Robeson
    Orson Welles
    Alma Thomas
    Stevie Wonder

3. Describe what you consider creative about one well-known creation such as: the Taj Mahal; Alvin Ailey's dance "Revelations"; Gordon Parks' photography book *Moments Without Proper Names;* Stevie Wonder's album *Inner Visions;* the Mesa Verde architecture in Colorado; e.e. cummings' poem "in just spring"; the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco; Goya's painting *Witches Sabbath;* The Watts Towers in Los Angeles; Supersonic Transport.

Ask the students to share the private family language used in their homes. Usually such inventions as "Scrippies" for breakfast cereal are invented by children and become joyfully preserved by adult use.

4. What are some ways that young children are creative with language? Find out what Kornei Chukovsky says about this in his book *From Two to Five.*

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that will give you more information on....

...the value of creativity

Imagination — Key to Human Potential. Polly McVickar. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1972. (paperback)

...creativity in the growing child

Children Discover Music and Dance. Emma D. Sheehy. New York: Teachers College Press, 1968.

From Two to Five. Kornei Chukovksy. Berkeley, California: University of California, 1963. (paperback)

In the Early World: Discovering Art Through Crafts. Elwyn S. Richardson. New York: Random House, 1964. (paperback)

...how parents can support children's creativity

A Creative Life for Your Children. Margaret Mead. Write to: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (booklet)

Guiding Your Child to a More Creative Life. Fredelle Maynard. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1973. (paperback)

For more information on children's inventive thinking, order the film *Experiencing and Representing,* Parts II, III and IV, and refer to the chapter on Representation in *Young Children in Action,* Mary Hohmann, Bernard Banet, and David P. Weikart. Write to: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 600 North River, Ypsilanti, Mi. 48197.

...some materials for creative use

Beautiful Junk. Dianne Warner and Jeanne Quill. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (booklet)

The Block Book. Elizabeth S. Hirsch, ed. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1974. (paperback)

Mud, Sand and Water. Dorothy M. Hill. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1977. (booklet)

The Mother's Almanac. Marguerite Kelly and Elia Parsons. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1975. (paperback)

Autobiographies often give clues about the ways a parent, close relative or friend has released or reinforced a creative spark in the writer.

THE HANDICAPPED CHILD: A CHILD FIRST

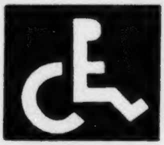
I'll Dance at Your Wedding

TO BEGIN...

The word "handicapped" brings to mind a variety of different images — perhaps a vision of someone blind, deaf, or in a wheelchair comes to mind, or even the idea of helpless dependency. Some of these images focus on negative aspects, on the *disabilities* rather than the *abilities,* on the differences which make the handicapped person stand out rather than on the similar needs he or she has in common with other human beings.

This unit focuses on the similarities of handicapped and non-handicapped young children. The handicapped child shares with the non-handicapped child the same needs for love, care, stimulation, and security.

An interesting way to begin this unit is to show the film "What Color Is the Wind?" (Available free from Modern Talking Pictures, 2323 New Hyde Park Road, New Hyde Park, New York 10042. Include show date and alternate date.) This movie shows how the father of twins, one of whom is blind, is able to help both children experience the environment to the fullest extent possible.



Or present the international sign for handicapped to your class and discuss:

- What it means
- Why it is used
- How it is used
- Why this particular symbol is used
- Where students have seen it.

FROM THE EDITORS

All parents want the best of life for their children. It is a painful shock, then, when parents discover that their child has a handicap. Many parents learn, however, that a handicapped child can usually lead a full life. They often find that their own lives are enriched by the experience of raising a handicapped child.

This booklet gives a brief introduction to the kinds of handicapping conditions and the sources of help for handicapped children and their families. You'll learn that the way handicapped children feel about themselves and the way others respond to them helps to determine how fully these children develop. You'll also find out ways that parents can meet the special challenge of raising a handicapped child.

THE BIG IDEAS

- The child who has a handicap can usually lead a full life.
- The parents of a handicapped child are most helpful when they accept the child's limitations but give him or her every opportunity to grow.
- The challenge of raising a handicapped child can broaden and enrich the parents' lives.

. . . the vulnerable child
—Lois B. Murphy and
Ethel M. Leeper

The Vulnerable Child. Caring for Children series, No. 5. Lois B. Murphy and Ethel M. Leeper. Order from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402

A HANDICAP:

It's How You Look at It

At the playground, Jamie whispered to his best friend, Sam: "Let's get the wagon."

Sam got the wagon. "OK, Jamie, get in." Jamie grinned. "OK. Help me with my brace."

Sam and Jamie unlocked the brace on Jamie's leg and Jamie sat down in the wagon. Sam pulled Jamie and both boys made engine noises . . .

In the sandbox on the same playground, Carol shoveled sand into a pail. She used her "good" hand and hid the other in her sleeve.

When Carol was very young, she lost a finger in the car door. Neither she nor her parents could adjust to the loss. Now, she never lets others see that hand. And she rarely plays with other children.

How do you separate being "normal" from having special needs?

It's hard. Often there's no clear dividing line between the two. Carol and Jamie, like most handicapped children, are "normal" in many ways. They like wagons and sand. They cry when they fall. They feel happy when someone hugs them. They are more like other children than different from them. Like other handicapped children, however, they have some physical, emotional or mental problem that will affect the course of their lives.

FEELINGS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

The way a parent helps a child to live with the handicap is very important.

> Except for the few profoundly handicapped children, the handicap is not as important as the way children feel about themselves and the way others respond to them.

For example, Jamie's disability does not hold him back. He accepts his problem and works around it. So does his friend.

Carol and her parents, on the other hand, have let a very small handicap become a real problem. It affects the way she acts with other people and how she feels about herself.

> The parents' attitudes toward the handicap are the key to the way their child develops.

The first mistake in working with a handicapped child is believing that a miracle will be wrought. The second mistake is believing that a miracle cannot be wrought.

U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION ESTIMATES OF SCHOOL-AGE HANDICAPPED

Mentally Retarded	3 %
Learning Disabled	2 %
Emotionally Disturbed	2 %
Speech and Language Impaired	3.5%
Blind and Visually Impaired	.1%
Deaf and Hearing Impaired	1 %

Over one million preschool children have physical, emotional, and mental handicaps.

WHAT IS A HANDICAP?

Here are some of the problems handicapped children may have:

Some handicapped children see nothing at all.

Some see very poorly, even with thick glasses.

Some cannot hear at all.

Some have partial hearing.

Some children suffer from poor health caused by a disease such as cancer or a defect such as a faulty valve in the heart.

A defect in the bones or nervous system may prevent some children from gaining full control of part or all of their bodies.

Some children have speech impairments; they have difficulty speaking.

It is difficult for some children to listen, think, talk or use symbols because their brains and central nervous systems are not operating in the normal way.

Some children suffer from emotional problems. They may feel very insecure, guilty, or afraid most of the time. They may live in an imaginary world, ignore or shy away from other people.

Some children are born handicapped. Others become handicapped later on through disease or an accident. They may have handicaps that range from mild, to moderate, to severe, to profound. A profound handicap, the most serious impairment, has the most drastic impact on their development. Although all these children have special needs, they do not need the same kinds of services. One may wear a hearing aid and need no other services. Another may need a complete range of services such as physical and speech therapy.

Discuss the importance of prenatal care and what is involved in the following:

- nutrition
- medication
- X-rays
- injury
- disease, infections

THE SHOCK

Long before the baby is born, parents invest their dreams and hopes in the coming child. This is a time of dreaming and looking forward.

When parents are told their child has a handicap, it's bound to be a shock. Suddenly they feel different — set apart from other people:

See: *The Exceptional Child in the Family.* Alan O. Ross. New York: Grune and Stratton, 1964. Parents go through a series of steps including mourning, denial, guilt and failure during the process of accepting the reality of a handicapped child.

Chris: I kept asking myself — why me? It didn't seem fair. All of us — me, my wife, our children, even our own parents were affected by Sarah's handicap.

Jean: When Danny was born and we learned about his problem, I kept going over and over what I did — or didn't do — during my pregnancy to cause his handicap. I wished I'd eaten more nutritious foods. I blamed myself for moving those heavy boxes. I was angry for letting myself get tired and sick the third month of pregnancy. I felt terribly guilty.

Bob: I wondered if I was at fault. Did my genes cause the disability? I began to worry about having a second child.

Nancy: When I was growing up, I hardly ever saw any handicapped people. Even as an adult, I knew no handicapped adults or parents of handicapped children. And now I had a handicapped child of my own. I didn't know what to do. I was afraid to bring Eric out in public for fear everyone would gawk and stare. So I stayed at home. This made me even more lonely and depressed. It began to tear apart our marriage and family life. Fortunately, when we met other parents of handicapped children, I got the support and confidence I needed. And I became my old self once again.

Stan: It was a relief to find out why Peter was so different from all our other children, but the diagnosis made me more afraid. His behavior was not just another "stage." The future was so uncertain. Could we pay additional medical bills? We spent so much time taking Peter to doctors and special programs. Would our lives ever be "normal" again? Would Peter go to school and someday live on his own? Or would I be taking care of him forever? What if I died? My responsibility made me panic.

Most parents of handicapped children have some of these feelings. One of their first tasks is to accept these painful feelings as normal and try to work through them.

MUTTERINGS OVER THE CRIB OF A DEAF CHILD

"How will he hear the bell at school
Arrange the broken afternoon,
And know to run across the cool
Grasses where the starlings cry,
Or understand the day is gone?"

Well, someone lifting cautious brows
Will take the measure of the clock.
And he will see the birchen boughs
Outside the sagging dark from the sky,
And the shade crawling upon the rock.

"And how will he know to rise at morning?
His mother has other sons to waken.
She has the stove she must build to burning
Before the coals of the night time die,
And he never stirs when he is shaken."

I take it the air affects the skin,
And you remember, when you were young,
Sometimes you could feel the dawn begin,
And the fire would call you, by and by,
Out of the bed and bring you along.

"Well, good enough. To serve his needs
All kinds of arrangements can be made.
But what will you do if his finger bleeds?
Or a bobwhite whistles invisibly
And flutes like an angel off the shade?"

He will learn pain. And, as for the bird,
It is always darkening when that comes out.
I will putter as though I had not heard,
And lift him into my arms and sing
Whether he hears my song or not.

The Green Wall
James Wright
New Haven, Conn.:
Yale University Press, 1957.

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by permission of Wesleyan University Press.

Discuss:
- How does this father feel?
- What worries him now?
- What are his future worries?
- How does the question/answer format show the father's mixed feelings?
- Does he give any sense of hope?

A Special Challenge

Time passes. The parents continue to care for the children, buy the food, and clean the house. They cope. The handicap does not go away, however.

At some point, many parents learn that their *own attitudes* will make raising a handicapped child a devastating experience or a rewarding challenge. They begin to rethink their assumptions about handicapped people. They reevaluate what is important in life.

Ask students what it means to "rethink assumptions." See: *Stigma*. Irving Goffman. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963.

They become able to look at the handicapped child's total growth and special gifts. And they figure out ways to meet the needs of both the handicapped child and other family members.

In other words, they accept the child's handicap. It isn't easy. It doesn't happen all at once. They never stop adjusting to the special problems that the child's handicap creates. They never stop changing or growing.

Why do parents have to keep changing?

If parents suspect they have a handicapped child, there are several steps they can take to develop this positive and courageous approach to raising a child who has special needs:

IF PARENTS SUSPECT THAT THEIR CHILD HAS A HANDICAP, THEY SHOULD GET A DIAGNOSIS FROM A DOCTOR OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Early detection of a problem can help parents understand their child's needs and get special help. For instance, a child with a hearing loss may be fitted for a hearing aid. This may prevent language or behavior problems that sometimes result when a child can't hear.

"Child Find" activities are being conducted by all public school systems; these activities focus on early identification of children with handicaps. Such activities are required under PL 94-142.

SEEK OUT SUPPORT GROUPS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS.

Long ago, we used to hear stories about children who were hidden away because of handicaps. Fortunately, all this has changed. Today, handicapped children and their families have many sources of help:

Federal, state and local governments

Congress has recently passed laws to help give handicapped children educational opportunities equal to those for non-handicapped children. Now, all states are working hard to help local school districts meet this requirement.

Services are also provided by local social service organizations and health departments.

Private organizations

There are organizations that give parents information about a particular type of handicap and the kinds of services available in different parts of the country.

Friends, counselors and parents of handicapped children

These people can provide comfort, understanding and support as parents learn to accept their child's handicap and figure out ways for themselves and the entire family to meet the challenges before them.

TRY TO BE REALISTIC ABOUT THE CHILD'S HANDICAP BUT PROVIDE ALL THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH THAT EVERY CHILD NEEDS

It's important to be honest with the child and other people about the child's handicap.

> *"Yes, Sarah does talk differently than you do. It's harder for her to move the muscles in her lips and tongue than it is for you and me. But it's OK to be different. Everybody is."*

But remember to notice the child's strengths as well as weaknesses. Sarah, for example, may not express herself well with words. She may, however, draw with skill or handle pets with unusual gentleness.

The handicapped child needs the same opportunities to grow as a non-handicapped child — a chance to develop muscles, get along with other people, deal with feelings, learn to think. A child with mental retardation, for example, needs a ride on a swing, children to play with, blocks to build with, and a trip to the fire station — as well as special help. A variety of experiences allows the child to develop.

Handicapped children need to use all their senses in processing a variety of experiences. The more often different senses are used to teach a handicapped child a skill, the better.

TREAT THE HANDICAPPED CHILD AS AN EQUAL MEMBER OF THE FAMILY.

Parents can set expectations and limits for the handicapped child just as they do for other members of the family. Every person in the family is capable of doing some kind of job — whether it's sponging off the table or helping to cook the meals.

Rules of behavior such as "no hitting" or "bedtimes" can apply to all. Each child, however, may require different supervision or help. Tommy, an emotionally disturbed child, needs help when he becomes frustrated or angry. At those times his parents stand near to help him find words to express his anger or a space in which to run off his frustration.

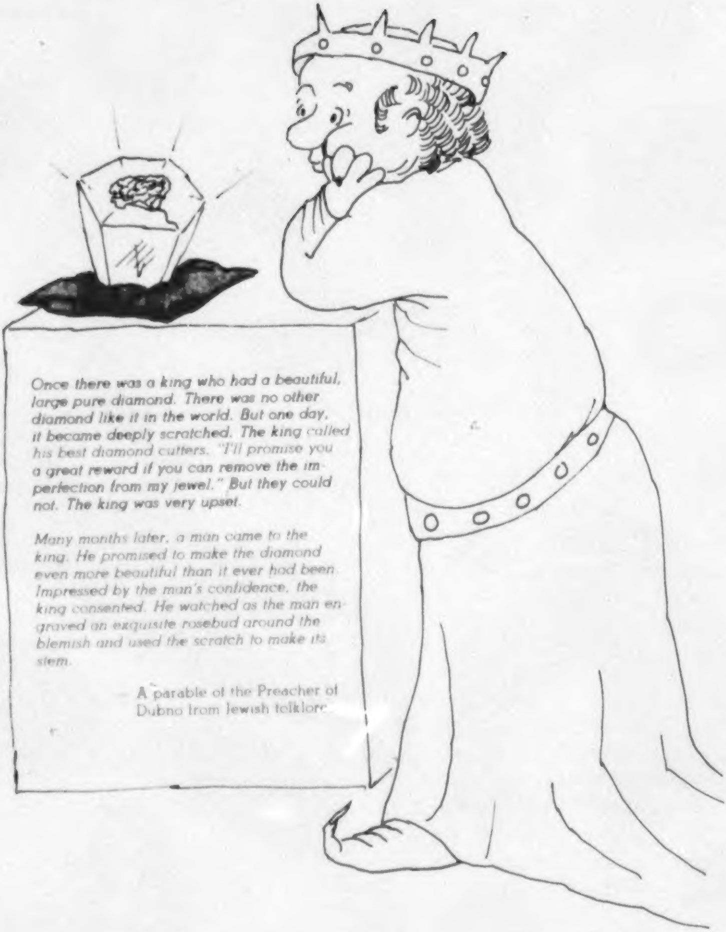
LOOKING FORWARD

What can a parent hope for a handicapped child? A few profoundly handicapped children will need supervision or physical care all of their lives. But most handicapped children will be able to enjoy the full range of life's activities — including a job, marriage, and children.

Whatever the handicap, though, the child needs opportunities to grow and become — just like any child.

More than 200,000 mentally retarded persons are living in public residential facilities. However, opportunities for employment of the handicapped are increasing. Sheltered workshops provide an environment where the more moderately and severely handicapped can work under less pressure. Group homes provide a semi-independent situation for the handicapped adult. They have a full-time adult sponsor who helps the handicapped maintain independence.

Individual differences are not to be viewed as deviations from the norm but as the basis on which content and methods of a school's curriculum are to be built.



Once there was a king who had a beautiful, large pure diamond. There was no other diamond like it in the world. But one day, it became deeply scratched. The king called his best diamond cutters. "I'll promise you a great reward if you can remove the imperfection from my jewel." But they could not. The king was very upset.

Many months later, a man came to the king. He promised to make the diamond even more beautiful than it ever had been. Impressed by the man's confidence, the king consented. He watched as the man engraved an exquisite rosebud around the blemish and used the scratch to make its stem.

— A parable of the Preacher of Dubno from Jewish folklore

Characters:

Laura Riley — *a young mother*
Hunter Riley — *Laura's husband*
Cameron Riley — *6-month-old deaf son of Laura and Hunter*
Ned Riley — *Hunter's brother*
Nancy Riley — *Ned's wife*
Zack Riley — *Ned and Nancy's son*
Little Ned Riley — *Ned and Nancy's son*
Wendy and Freddie — *Hunter's friends who are getting married*
Mark McFarland — *13-year-old deaf boy*
Christine and Jerry McFarland — *Mark's parents*

Documentary:

Two handicapped children — one blind and one with a prosthesis — are shown in everyday situations overcoming obstacles to success. Their parents talk about their feelings, how they have dealt with both their child's and their own feelings, and what their hopes for the future are.

Have the students discuss why they think the children's parents in the documentary want them to participate in as many "normal" activities as possible.

FILM REVIEW SECTION

I'll Dance At Your Wedding

Laura and Hunter Riley discover that Cameron, their baby, has a hearing loss. A hearing aid has been prescribed, but both parents are worried that Cameron will never learn to communicate with others. Laura feels very depressed and self-conscious about Cameron's handicap. Hunter thinks that she is overprotecting Cameron. He also feels ignored by Laura and cut off from other people. He convinces her to bring Cameron to a friend's wedding. There they meet Mark, a deaf teenager who plays baseball. They talk to his parents. This experience is a turning point in their and Cameron's lives.

WHAT DO LAURA AND HUNTER LEARN AT THE WEDDING?

DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM

How did Hunter's reaction to Cameron's handicap differ from Laura's?

- Do you think that Hunter was more realistic in his perceptions than Laura? Or Laura more perceptive than Hunter?
- Do you think that their reactions were influenced by other people, such as their relatives or the women at the sewing club?
- Do you think that their reactions were rooted more in their own fears than in what the doctors had told them?
- Why did Laura change her feelings?

Comments:
Neither Hunter nor Laura's initial reaction is totally related to the facts. Hunter had a tendency to make light of the repercussions of Cameron's deafness. Laura had the opposite reaction: she was totally paralyzed by the thought of Cameron's limitations. Both of the parents were heavily influenced by the reactions — what they perceived to be the reactions — of others. Some of this may be attributed to the fact that Hunter and Laura are so young and are inexperienced in dealing with a handicap.

What do you think the outlook is for Cameron?

- Why couldn't Laura believe what the doctors at the clinic told her?
- Are Hunter and Laura realistic in expecting Cameron to succeed as well as Mark has?
- Do you think that Laura and Hunter's attitude toward Cameron will be a deciding factor in his future?

Comments:
It is, of course, impossible to predict what Cameron's future will be. A great many factors, such as his determination, the feelings of competence and self-esteem that he learns, and the opportunities for education that are provided him, will play a role in determining Cameron's development.

What kind of support did Laura and Hunter receive?

- How helpful were the people at the clinic in helping Laura and Hunter adjust to Cameron's handicap?
- How helpful were Nancy and her family?
- Did the questions of the women at the sewing group provide a negative support system?
- Which of the people at the wedding were the most helpful to the Rileys?

Comments:
Laura and Hunter received various types of support — both helpful and not-so-helpful. The only formal means of support came from the clinic.

Here, while the information received was factual, there was no support system to help the parents deal with the impact of the news. The sewing group's comments were, obviously, less supportive. Nancy and Hunter's family were able to provide a strong support system. Surprisingly, though, the greatest support was obtained at the wedding from strangers — Wendy, Jerry, and Christine.

ACTIVITY PAGES

activity #1
CONFRONTING YOUR FEELINGS

Describe how you feel when a blind person enters a room, stands next to you on the street corner, or sits next to you on the bus.

- What do you do?
- What do you feel you should do?
- Do you act differently towards this person than you would towards a non-handicapped person?

activity #2
MEETING THE FAMILY'S NEEDS

You are a social worker who visits families in their homes, the hospital, or your office. Your job is to help parents find ways to meet the special needs of their children and, when necessary, refer them to other professionals. In the following situations, discuss what you think the problem might be and what you could do or say to help the parents. As you give your advice, try to keep in mind the big ideas in the previous articles.

1. Marcia has two children, an 8-year-old and a 5-year-old. Tony, the youngest, has polio, a crippling disease rarely seen now since people can be inoculated to prevent it.

   When you arrive, Tom, the older child, is in a bad mood. Tony has just helped himself to another snack and announced that he's going to watch TV after supper. *"It isn't fair,* says Tom. *"Tony gets to watch TV and eat snacks whenever he wants. But I can't eat till supper and I have to do my homework instead of watching TV."*

   Marcia tells him, *"Listen, Tom. Tony can't walk like you and ride a bike like you. You've got to be patient with him. Tony is just different. So he needs different things."*

2. The hospital calls to tell you that another couple, Ed and Mary, have just delivered their first child. Their baby has Down Syndrome (formerly known as Mongolism), a handicapping condition involving mental retardation. It is caused by a genetic defect.

In many cases children with Down Syndrome are at the moderate to severe range of mental retardation. Some may be able to hold an unskilled job, but all will probably need supervision throughout their lives.

You are asked to visit Ed and Mary right away. When you arrive at the hospital, both parents seem in a state of shock.

Typically, the birth of a handicapped child may cause parents to feel they are at fault — being punished for past sins. This results in a sense of guilt about the child's condition.

3. Phillip asks you to visit his home. He and his wife, Kathy, disagree about whether Chris, their 4 year old son, has a problem. You ask what the problem seems to be.

The key to determining whether there might be a problem lies in:

- what the behavior or concern is
- how it is manifested
- its persistence
- its interference with the child's achieving functional independence

Philip says, *"Well, it's a lot of things. The main thing is that Chris seems to avoid us. He never looks at me. He shrinks back and licks his hands whenever I try to hug him."*

"Maybe this is just a stage he is going through," reassures Kathy, *"and he'll grow out of it."*

"Somehow Chris is really different. Our other kids avoid us occasionally when they're mad — but not like Chris. Not all the time. All our other kids liked to knock down towers, but they didn't build the exact same four-block towers every time and build them up, knock them down in the exact same way for hours. They discovered new things with the blocks," says Phillip.

4. You learn that Sandra can't decide whether to accept an invitation to a birthday party for her daughter, Kara. Kara has been blind from birth. On the one hand, Sandra welcomes the idea of taking Kara to the party because Sandra would love a few moments to herself. On the other hand, Sandra fears that Kara may not benefit from the party. Other children there might make fun of Kara because they have never seen a blind child and are not used to some of her unusual habits.

activity #3
HEALING THE WOUND

Imagine that you have a 5-year-old child with cerebral palsy. Because of his handicap, your child lacks control over many muscles in his body. Over the years he has made tremendous progress, depsite his handicapping condition. Now he is as independent as any 5-year-old. He walks, dresses himself (though slowly) and feeds himself. He's even begun to read! But he has a jerky, somewhat spastic walk and he sometimes grimaces as he talks.

He has just begun regular kindergarten in public school. One day he comes home and bursts into tears. *"Somebody made fun of me. He said I was stupid. He said I walk funny."*

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

GRAB BAG

to do

1. Invite siblings and parents of handicapped children to your classroom to talk about the following:

    their feelings when they found out their child, brother or sister was handicapped
    the kinds of assistance that the family and handicapped child have received
    how the handicapped child is treated compared to the other children
    how the experience of having a handicapped child has affected them and other members of the family
    how people outside the family have treated the handicapped child and how they wish people would act toward the child
    their hopes for the handicapped child's future.

2. Visit a day care center, Head Start center, nursery school or parent cooperative that has both handicapped and non-handicapped children. Observe a handicapped and a non-handicapped child playing in the same area of the room. Take notes on how these two children are similar or different in their:

Non-handicapped children are deprived of important experiences if they are not allowed to associate with handicapped children

physical coordination
language ability
interest in other children and adults
skill in playing with other children
enjoyment of play
ability to solve problems, pretend and create.

Over all, do you think there are more similarities or differences between these two children? Write a short paper explaining your view.

3. Borrow a wheelchair for half a day. Go everywhere in it -- to classes, to the drinking fountain, to the bathroom, in and out of the front door of school. Afterwards, describe how it felt to be unable to walk. What special problems did you have? How did other people react to you? How did you want them to react when they saw you?
4. Watch the same TV show a friend watches, but turn your sound off so that you cannot hear. Both of you should keep notes on what is happening while you watch. Afterwards, compare notes. Were you able to tell what was going on? How did you do it? How did it feel to be unable to hear? Do you think that TV networks should do anything special to help deaf or hearing-impaired people benefit from TV?

to discuss

1. How does society benefit from having handicapped people?
2. Why has there been prejudice against handicapped people in the past?
3. There are more handicapped persons today than in the past. How do you account for this?

Possible answers:
- There is increased concern about children who encounter school failure
- Medical advances now allow life to be prolonged for some types of handicaps. (Down Syndrome persons usually are very susceptible to upper respiratory infections, and used to die earlier in life, but medicine now prolongs life; techniques for delivering children save many who might not have made it years ago.)
- There is early diagnosis of possible handicapping conditions.

to research

1. Handicapped individuals who have led full and productive lives. Some people you might research are:

   Jan, a child with Down's Syndrome. See *A Special Gift -- The Story of Jan,* by T. deVries Kruyt.
   Helen Keller, a deaf and blind writer. See *The Story of My Life;* her autobiography.
   Harold Krents, a blind lawyer. See *To Race The Wind,* his autobiography.
   Rogers Meyers, a mentally retarded person in the restaurant business. See *Like Normal People,* his biography.
   Robert Russell, a blind man. See *To Catch An Angel,* his autobiography.
   Jill Kinmont, a physically handicapped teacher. See *The Other Side of the Mountain,* by E. G. Valens.
   Stevie Wonder, a blind musician. See *Stevie Wonder,* by Crescent Dragonwagon.

2. How people's lives have been affected by a handicapped person. Some books that might help you in your research are:

   A Place for Noah, by Josh Greenfield, father of an autistic child.
   Karen, by Marie Killilea, mother of a girl with cerebral palsy.
   Sonrise, by B. N. Kaufman, father of an autistic child.

3. Organizations that are available to aid handicapped persons and their families in your area and across the country. Find out whom they serve and what their services include.
4. One handicapping condition. Look for causes of the handicap, a description of the problem, treatment for it, outlook for a child with the handicap, services and organizations available for help.

BOOK BROWSING

Here are some books that contain more information on. . .

. . .handicapping conditions

Help for the Handicapped Child. Florence Weiner. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973.

Birth Defects and Your Baby. Jessyca Russel Gaver. New York: Lancer Books, Inc., 1972.

Behavior of Exceptional Children. Norris G. Haring. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1974.

. . .the handicapped child's needs

Infants and Mothers. T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1969.

Listen to Your Heart. E. H. Wentworth. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974.

Preschool Programming of Children With Disabilities. Roger Reger, ed. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas, 1970.

A Sympathetic Understanding of the Child: Birth to Sixteen. David Elkind. Boston: Allyn I. Bacon, Inc., 1974.

. . .sources of help

Closer Look information packets: *Practical Advice to Parents; Know Your Rights;* and *Report from Closer Look.* All *Closer Look* materials are FREE from: Closer Look, Box 1492, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Also: "Exceptional Parent," a magazine that provides useful information for parents of handicapped children.